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Inter-Arab Affairs

Tunisia's Ben Yahia Receives 'Abd-al-Majid

LD0908223291 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Excerpts] Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahia held talks at the Ministry this evening with Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, the Arab League secretary general, who today began a tour of the Maghreb capitals, starting with Tunis. The talks focused on a number of Arab issues, foremost the Palestinian issue, and ways to put the Arab house back in order and support joint Arab action. [passage omitted]

'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid went on to say that his talks in Tunisia were extremely useful and that they will be completed soon, either directly or through indirect contacts. Today's meeting opened encouraging prospects for joint Arab action. He said in this respect: Tunisia's role is essential in the forthcoming stage and I do not forget Tunisia's role in hosting the Arab League and providing it with all the facilities during that period. Now that the Arab League has returned to Cairo we are anxious to maintain the cooperation which existed between Tunisia and the Arab League and to bolster the links with Tunisia. We are also anxious to see the second center of the Arab League, which the Arab League's ministerial council decided to create in Tunisia, accomplish its work within the framework of the Arab League and carry out its tasks and funcitons in the interest of Arab causes.

PLO Political Department Head on ICO Conference

LD1008030691 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Excerpts] Brothers, in a speech delivered at the conference of the Islamic Conference Organization foreign ministers in Istanbul, brother Abu Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi], head of the PLO's Political Department, warned against ignoring Palestinian national rights and the exclusion of the issue and citizens of Jerusalem. Brother Abu Lutf says that the Palestine issue, the issue of Arabs and Muslims, is the main preoccupation of all of us. It is now coming to a decisive turning point. [passage omitted]

We are now witnessing U.S. endeavors to achieve a political settlement. We note with complete clarity that they need substantial material evidence to confirm their credibility. Despite sensing their seriousness, our past experiences have proved to us the United State's complete bias toward Israel and its hostile and expansionist policies. The United States has begun to call for a twofold path as a basis for resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict, and, consequently, resolving the Palestine issue. Thus, it has ignored that the essence of the conflict in the region is the Palestine issue and that the issue is basically embodied in the Zionist invasion and occupation of the land of Palestine, making its people homeless, and the Judaizing of the Palestinian homeland.

In the past, and over many years, we made exhaustive efforts to achieve a just political settlement. We have put forward a host of Arab and Palestinian initiatives that gained comprehensive international acceptance. We have also supported all the constructive international initiatives. However, the rejection of all these initiatives came from Israel through its intransigence, stubbornness, defiance of world public opinion, and denial of international legitimacy. It was, regrettably, receiving support and encouragement from the U.S. Administration. The corridors and resolutions of the United Nations are witnesses to that.

Now we regrettably feel that there is pressure exerted on us to accept the Israeli conditions, which violate international norms and laws, instead of pressure being exerted on the occupation. The heaviest of these pressures are the financial bloackade, the imposition of political isolation, and the repeated psychological warfare campaigns. Despite all that, is it conceivable for us to submit to these pressures and relinquish our absolute right to the independent representation of our Palestinian people? Is it conceivable for us to respond to those who demand that we agree to the exclusion of the holy Jerusalem issue from the agenda of the proposed conference? Is it conceivable for us to accept conditions that decide the composition of the Palestinian delegation so that it excludes those who belong to the PLO or origniate from Jerusalem? How can we accept that Israel should be granted the right to veto the names of our delegates? [passage omitted]

Islamic Affairs

ICO Foreign Ministers Issue Final Communique

LD1008214191 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1500 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Istanbul, 10 Aug (SPA)—At the end of its proceedings last night, the 20th meeting of foreign ministers of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] expressed its welcome, gratitude, and appreciation for the generous offer made by King Fahd Bin 'Abd al-'Aziz of Saudi Arabia, the custodian of the two holy mosques, to host the first conference on Muslim communities and minorities. The meeting also welcomed his proposal that this conference be held in the blessed land of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in the chaste spaces of the noble Ka'bah in Mecca, so that solutions may be sought to the problems which face the Muslim communities and minorities, and so that future horizons may be illuminated.

On behalf of Muslim communities and minorities in particular and all Muslims in general, the meeting expressed its most sincere thanks and gratitude to King Fahd Bin 'Abd al-'Aziz and to the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The conference also reaffirmed its member countries' determination to endeavor persistently to achieve that which will benefit Muslim communities and minorities in nonmember countries. The meeting expressed its full appreciation and support for the efforts made by the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the leadership of King Fahd Bin 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Sa'ud, the Republic of Dibouti, and the ICO secretary general to encourage national reconciliation in Somalia, and to look for ways and means to bring about a peaceful settlement of the crisis in Somalia. It urged the Somali political leaders and movements to cooperate fully with these efforts. The meeting called on the member states and the international community to offer urgent humanitarian assistance to reconstruct this country, and to resume economic cooperation with the Republic of Somalia. It expressed the great need for Somalia to retrieve its unity, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence. This came in the final communique issued by the meeting last night. The 20th meeting of the Islamic foreign ministers charged Iraq with the full responsibility for the human and material losses incurred by Kuwait and the other states. It asked Iraq to pay compensation for these losses in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council, without any procrastination or delay.

The meeting welcomed Kuwait's regaining of its sovereignty, independence, and terrorial integrity and the return of its legitimate government.

It reviewed the statements it issued between the 19th and 20th sessions of the ICO foreign ministers relating to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and its occupation of Kuwaiti territory and stressed the need for full implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions in that regard so as to guarantee that there is no further act of aggression on the part of Iraq, in light of its previous acts of aggression against neighboring countries.

The meeting also expressed discontent at the fact that the Iraqi regime has not fully complied with the resolutions issued by the United Nations, indicating that it still has aggressive intentions, thus necessitating the continuation of sanctions stipulated by the UN Security Council resolutions.

The meeting expressed its grief over the ordeal to which the Iraqi people are being subjected as a result of the Iraqi regime's lack of commitment to the implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy, which thus reflects that regime's disregard for the interests of the Iraqi people.

It expressed extreme concern and discontent over the Iraqi authorities' procrastination vis-a-vis the implementation of resolutions relating to the release of Kuwaiti prisoners and citizens and other detainees in Iraq and called on the Iraqi authorities to free them immediately.

It stressed the need for Iraq's active commitment to all UN Security Council resolutions and also the need for the removal of weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East region as a whole.

The meeting reaffirmed its resolve to strive for just and permanent peace, particularly in the Middle East, Palestine, South Asia, and South Africa. It also reiterated its view that dialogue and cooperation in the political and economic spheres are inseparable twins. The meeting stressed the member states' determination to continue to strive for the prosperity of Islamic groups and minorities in the non-member states. The 20th meeting of Islamic foreign ministers asserted its effective solidarity with and total support for the just struggle being waged by the Palestinian people and with great pride saluted the Palestinian people's heroic steadfastness and great sacrifices and the continuation and escalation of the Palestinian people's blessed intifadah in confronting the tyrant Israeli army of occupation, and the Palestinians' brave resistance to this army's oppressive and savage practices. It called on the member states to provide all forms of political and economic support for the Palestinian people. The meeting strongly condemned the expansionist settlement policy of the Israeli Government and its expulsion of Palestinian Arab citizens, which is a violation of basic human rights and all international treaties and charters. The meeting regarded the establishment of settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories and the Syrian Golan as the main obstacle to the international efforts being made to bring about a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

The meeting called on the international community to provide swift international protection for the Palestinian people living under Israeli occupation and to bring Israel, the aggressive and occupying state, to commit itself to implementation of all the clauses of the 1949 Geneva Convention relating to the protection of civilians in time of war.

It also urged the UN secretary general to call on parties signatory to the Fourth Geneva Convention to meet in order to take the necessary measures to make Israel respect the clauses of the convention, in accordance with its international commitments.

It expressed continuing deep concern over the continuation of the plan to repatriate Soviet, Falasha, and other Jews to Israel and over their intensive settlement in the occupied Palestinian lands, including Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan. This paves the way for international Zionism to implement its colonial plan by setting up what it calls "Greater Israel," which constitutes a grave peril to the historic rights of the Palestinian people and a threat to the security of the Arab and Islamic countries.

The meeting called on the UN Security Council to set up an international committee for the supervision and control of settlement in the occupied Palestinian and Arab lands. It stressed the Palestinian people's right to return to their occupied land and homeland, as was established by the the UN General Assembly in its resolution 194.

In this context, the meeting called on the governments of the USSR, the United States, and other concerned friendly states to stop providing Israel with facilities, aid, and financial loans until it submits and implements all the resolutions of international legitimacy relating to the solving of the Palestinian question and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The meeting stressed that the Palestine issue is the principal issue of Muslims and the essence of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and that efforts are being made to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on legitimate international resolutions.

It called for speeding up the convening of an international conference on peace in the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of the permanent member states of the UN Security Council and all the parties concerned, including the PLO, on an equal footing. This should take place in accordance with all the relevant UN resolutions including UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, in a way that will achieve comprehensive Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, enable the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable national rights, including their right to return, exercise self-determination, and establish an independent state of their own on the soil of their homeland with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

The meeting reaffirmed that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and that it alone has the full right to represent them at all conferences and activities which concern the Palestine issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The meeting expressed its deep concern over the agreements signed between the United States and Israel regarding cooperation between them, which allow for U.S. arms to be stored in Israel and for Israel to be supplied with the most advanced destructive weapons, which will encourage it to expand, act aggressively, and colonize at the expense of Arab territories.

The meeting repeated its condemnation of Israel for continuously refusing to implement the UN resolutions and the resolutions of the International Atomic Energy Agency which call for Israel's nuclear establishments to be subjected to international monitoring and inspection. The meeting urged member states to resist the attempts to bring about the cancellation of UN General Assembly Resolution 3379/1975, which describes Zionism as a form of racism, as long as Israel continues to refuse to comply with the provisions and resolutions of international legitimacy. The meeting strongly condemned Israel for refusing to comply with UN Security Council Resolution 497/1981 and for imposing its domination, laws, and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan and for the annexation practices and policies it pursues and the building of settlements and confiscation of land. The meeting regarded all these measures as null and void, describing them as false and constituting a violation of the bases and principles of international law with regard to occupation and war, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.

The meeting declared the Islamic nation's commitment to the liberation of the blessed al-'Aqsa mosque—the first of the two qiblas and the third of the holy places—and reaffirmed that holy Jerusalem is part of the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967 and that it is the capital of the Palestinian state. The meeting renewed its commitment to the bolstering of Islamic solidarity to liberate holy Jerusalem and preserve its Arab and Islamic character. The meeting expressed its strong condemnation of Israel and its settlement plans, particularly in holy Jerusalem, and stressed that all the measures which have been taken by Israel to annex Jerusalem and impose Israeli laws on its Palestinian Arab inhabitants are null and void. It called on the international community to condemn the continuous criminal acts against the al-'Aqsa mosque and other Islamic and Christian holy places, and to compel Israel to comply with all international resolutions, the latest of which were the UN Security Council Resolutions 672 and 681 stipulating that a factfinding committee should be sent by the UN secretary general to ascertain the situation in holy Jerusalem and to make available the protection necessary for the Palestinian people and the holy places.

The meeting urged all states of the world to refrain from setting up their embassies and missions in the holy city of Jerusalem as an expression of their nonrecognition of Israel's annexation of the sacred city. The meeting expressed its appreciation for the efforts made by the Jerusalem Committee, under the leadership of His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco, and took cognizance of all the recommendations made by the committee at its 13th session held in Rabat on 15 October 1990.

The meeting called for the convening of an Islamic-Chrisian conference, in coordination with the Vatican, and with the participation of eastern churches, in order to preserve the identity of the sacred city and its religious and historic character. The meeting expressed its appreciation to the United Nations, the Arab League, the Nonaligned Movement, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the EEC, and the Vatican for their positions supporting the cause of Palestine, holy Jerusalem, and the national rights of the Palestinian people.

The meeting reaffirmed the importance of the vital role played by the Jerusalem Fund and its trust, in support of the struggle and jihad of the Palestinian people, and in boosting their valiant Intifadah inside its occupied homeland, and especially in the holy city of Jerusalem. The meeting asks the member states to commit themselves to covering its budget and to collecting donations for the fund and its trust.

The meeting condemned the continuation of Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon and the oppressive and military practices against Lebanese citizens. It called for Israel's immediate and unconditional withdrawal from the Lebanese territories. The meeting reaffirmed its desire to preserve Lebanon's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. It stressed also that the UN Security Council resolutions on Lebanon, particularly Resolution 425/1978, should be implemented. The meeting expressed its appreciation for the achievements of the Tripartite Supreme Arab Committee, and its approval of and support for the steps taken by the Lebanese Government to establish state authority over all Lebanese territory to enable it to repair and modernize the infrastructure and build the basic installations to stimulate the economy. The meeting called on the international community to participate in the international fund for the redevelopment of Lebanon, which was established at the Baghdad Arab summit.

The meeting saluted the heroic struggle of the people of Afghanistan for the liberation of their homeland and declared its recognition of and support for the role of the Afghan mujahidin in making Afghanistan once more an independent and nonaligned Islamic state. It called for a comprehensive political settlement in Afghanistan and in this connection welcomed the latest initiative by the UN secretary general.

The ICO secretary general also called for coordinating efforts with the UN secretary general and recommended that the ICO should play an active role with a view to reaching a just political solution in Afghanistan.

The meeting stressed that setting up a broad-based government is essential to regain peace and to enable the Afghan people to exercise their right to choose their political, economic, and social system without any outside interference. He declared his support for the Afghan mujahidin's efforts to form a broad-based government in Afghanistan. The meeting called for preparing the necessary conditions for the establishment of peace and normality so that Afghan refugees will be able to return normally to their homeland in safety and with dignity.

The meeting decided to continue to provide humanitarian and medical aid for the Afghan refugees and to work toward returning them to and settling them in Afghanistan with the assistance of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. It also renewed its call to all countries and to international and national organizations to offer assistance to ease the pain of the Afghan refugees, and approved the secretary general's recommendations regarding a study on reconstruction in Afghanistan which was prepared by the Islamic Development Bank and on appealing to all member states to offer financial and moral aid to implement these recomendations.

The meting endorsed the recommendations by the ICO secretary general regarding the study on the reconstruction of Afghanistan which was prepared by the Islamic Bank, and called on the member states to render moral and material support so that these recommendations can be implemented. The meeting called for finding a peaceful settlement to the conflict in Jamu and Kashmir in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations in this regard and with the Simla Accord. The meeting condemned the extensive oppressive antihuman rights campaigns against the people of Kashmir. The meeting called for respecting these rights including the right to self-determination and appealed to the Indian Government to permit the human rights committees and humanitarian organizations to visit Jamu and Kashmir. The meeting expressed its deep concern over the tension in the area and appealed to India and Pakistan to pull back their already deployed troops to their peace-time positions. The meeting reaffirmed its readiness to send a good offices mission under the chairmanship of the foreign ministers' conference to defuse the tension between the two countries and work for the realisation of peaceful solutions for the problem. The meeting called on the secretary general to set up a tripartite fact-finding committee to ascertain the situation in Jamu and Kashmir.

The meeting condemned the continuing aggression by the United States and also its threats and conspiracies against the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah [SPLAJ], including the economic boycott measures. The meeting reaffirmed its solidarity with Libya in its defense of its independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and in facing up to the economic boycott measures aimed at frustrating its development plans. The meeting also expressed its determination to strengthen the security of the member states and to secure cooperation and solidarity between the Islamic states in accordance with the aims and principles of the ICO charters and of the United Nations. The meeting reaffirmed that the security of any Islamic country concerned all Islamic countries. It also reaffirmed the need to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states, the principles of not resorting to the use of force in international relations, the peaceful settlement of conflicts, and noninterference in the internal affairs of states.

The meeting decided that the measures to build confidence and to establish security between the Islamic states, especially if they can be carried out on a large scale, can contribute considerably to securing more peace, security, and stability throughout the Islamic world, and to spreading a climate of trust and solidarity between the Islamic states. The meeting urged the member states to develop and formulate tangible proposals concerning measures to strengthen trust and security.

The meeting resolved that the small states are in particular more liable to be threatened from without and with intervention in their internal affairs. The meeting called on member states to render assistance when small states ask for it in order to bolster security in accordance with the principles, aims, and charter of the ICO. The meeting called on all states, particularly those in the regions concerned, to comply with the recommendations that aim at the establishment of areas free of nuclear weapons in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. The meeting reiterated the resolve of the member states to adopt the necessary measures to prevent nuclear proliferation on an international basis and without discrimination. It called on the disarmament conference to speed up work to reach an agreement on an international accord and provide assurance to the states that do not possess nuclear weapons regarding the non-use of nuclear weapons or threat to use them. The meeting called for the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction and expressed its satisfaction with the initiatives of some Arab states to establish a region free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East within the framework of the United Nations. It called for the establishment of such a region as soon as possible.

The meeting took cognizance of the developments under way on the international scene and particularly in eastern and central Europe. It expressed the hope that the consolidation of economic relations between the East and the West will not affect the establishment of priorities concerning economic cooperation and trade between these countries and the Islamic countries. The meeting also expressed the hope that the states of Eastern and Western Europe and other states will strive to respect the Islamic identity of the Islamic groups and minorities in their countries, in addition to their right to speak their own languages and practice their religious rites.

The meeting condemned the policy of apartheid. It declared its support for the constitutional principles in the Harare declaration and for the UN resolutions which constitute the basis for South Africa to become a democratic country free of apartheid. The meeting took cognizance of the decisions made by the Government of South Africa in consultation with the the political parties and organizations in South Africa. It urged this government to hasten and give momentum to this process in a useful and effective manner.

The meeting urged the Government of South Africa to take immediate steps to end violence and to protect the lives and properties of black citizens. It also urged all the political and popular organizations to put an end to the fratricidal fighting and called on the international community to exert pressure of every kind to make the Pretoria regime rapidily remove the apartheid system.

The meeting asserted that the economic crisis in Africa is a source of preoccupation for the entire Islamic nation and welcomed the efforts being made by the African countries to revive and develop their economies. It called on the international community, especially the advanced countries and the international funding agencies concerned, to contribute to the realization of the aims of the economic revival and development plan in the African countries. The meeting reaffirmed the sovereignty of the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros over the island of Mayotte and called on the French Government to honor the pledges it made prioe to the self- determination referendum on the Comoros on 22 September 1974 regarding honoring the territorial integrity and unity of the Comoros. The meeting urged the member states to use their influence—individually and collectively—with the French Government to speed up the process of negotiations with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Comoros on the basis of guaranteeing this country's national unity and territorial integrity. The meeting again declared its solidarity with Sudan—government and people—in its confrontation of hostile foreign plans and in Sudan's defense of its unity and territorial integrity. It appealed to all member states to render moral and material assistance to enable Sudan to preserve its unity, territorial integrity, and identity in accordance with the principles of the ICO Charter and resolutions.

The conference affirmed that the burying of poisonous nuclear waste on the territory of member states is a crime against humanity. It urged all the states that produce poisonous and dangerous waste to take all necessary measures to process and reprocess these waste products in their own countries. The conference urged all Islamic countries to ban all illegal transport operations across their borders of poisonous and dangerous waste.

The conference affirmed the inalienable right of the Islamic nation to development and the use of science and technology for peaceful purposes in economic and social domains. It urged the industrialized states to facilitate the process of the transfer of technology to the developing countries and to remove all the obstacles that impede the process. The conference asked the Islamic states to consolidate their cooperation in the framework of the permanent committee for scientific and technological cooperation.

The conference also expressed its support for the efforts made by the SPLAJ to secure compensation for the losses caused to it by colonialism, especially its efforts to limit the damages caused by the legacy of war, which has caused considerable losses such as death and harm to the innocent.

The conference affirmed the resolutions and statements it issued in Cyprus and expressed its solidarity with the Turkish Cypriot community in their just cause. The conference adopted a new resolution in this respect. It called on the two sides to negotiate to attain a settlement in accordance with the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution No. 649 of 1990. The conference appreciated the constructive efforts made by the Turkish Cypriot side in this respect.

The conference expressed its support for the constructive efforts made by the UN secretary general in the framework of his good offices mission. The conference stressed the great importance of respecting the principle of political equality in the process of the quest for a solution acceptable to both sides.

In this regard, the conference examined the request made by the Turkish Cypriot side for membership in the ICO. It decided to strengthen the participation of the Turkish Cypriot Muslim community in the activities and meetings of all ICO organs, including those emanating from it and affiliated to it. The conference decided that the request of the Turkish Cypriots for ICO membership will remain pending.

The conference urged the member states to expand their relations with the Turkish Cypriot people in all fields, including trade, commerce, tourism, investment, and sports.

The conference expressed its deep concern about the continuation of the ordeal of millions of refugees in various parts of the world, most of whom belong to the Islamic world. It also voiced its extreme concern over the cut in the level of international aid for refugees. It called on member states to cooperate with the UN commission for refugees and to secure additional resources to alleviate the suffering of the refugees in Islamic countries.

The conference urged the member states to take interest in the problems being faced by Muslim groups and minorities living in nonmember states, to perform an effective role in protecting them, and to take maximum efforts with the states in which these minorities live to recognize these minorities' full right to citizenship. This includes granting them their civil and religious rights and treating them fairly in accordance with the international charters and treaties on human rights and Islamic freedom.

The conference recommended that the relationship be improved between the ICO and the Islamic organizations and bodies in the member states on the one hand, and these Muslim groups and minorities on the other, in an aim to end the latter's isolation and to learn about their demands and needs.

The conference reaffirmed its previous resolutions regarding solidarity with the Muslims in the southern Philippines in their just struggle for the realization of their legitimate aspirations within the framework of the territorial integrity of the Republic of the Philippines. The conference was acquainted with the latest measures taken by the Philippine Government to solve the problem of the Muslims in the southern Philippines. The conference urged the Government of the Philippines to fully implement the 1976 Tripoli Agreement in spirit and letter to continue the efforts to grant autonomy to the southern Philippines, a matter that the Government of the Philippines agreed with the Moro National Liberation Front and the ICO. The conference reaffirmed its readiness to continue to render all types of humanitarian, material, financial, and political aid to the Muslims in the southern Philippines and to the Moro National Liberation Front to enable it to achieve its legitimate aspirations.

The conference reaffirmed its solidarity with the Turkish Muslim minority in Bulgaria and expressed its extreme appreciation for the continuous efforts made by the ICO contact team in this respect. It adopted the recommendations contained in the team's latest report. The conference recorded its satisfaction over the new method and new decisions made by the new Bulgarian leadership in order to alleviate the ordeal of the Turkish Muslim minority in Bulgaria.

The conference urged the Bulgarian Government to observe the pledges to which it has committed itself and to take all practical measures and provide all legal guarantees to establish and secure the respect of the religious, ethnic, and cultural rights of this minority and to eliminate the discrimination it suffers.

The conference recorded its concern over continuous disregard and violation of the rights and fundamental liberties of the Turkish Muslim minority in western Thrace. It called for the need for full respect for all their rights and collective and individual liberties.

The conference supported the list of the African candidates for the post of secretary general of the United Nations, adopted by the African summit in Abuja [Nigeria] on 27 July 1991. It urged the states that have not yet approved the status of the International Islamic Court of Justice and amended its charter to complete the adoption measures with the ICO general secretariat so as to achieve the necessary legal quorum for the court to begin its work.

The conference acknowledged the importance of following up the Cairo declaration on human rights in Islam and to keep it as an item on the agenda of the ordinary ministerial sessions of the ICO foreign ministers and to continue the discussion of it in order to realize the importance of joint action by the member states and the ICO general secretariat and to facilitate the upholding of all the Islamic values with regard to human rights. The conference called on the member states to coordinate their stance during the UN summit on human rights scheduled for 1993 in accordance with the guidelines entailed in the Cairo declaration on human rights in Islam.

The conference urged the member states to sign or ratify as soon as possible the various agreements concluded within the framework of the ICO. The conference expressed anew its support for the convening of an international conference under UN auspices to define terrorism and to distinguish it from the peoples' struggle for national liberation. The conference was acquainted with the resolutions of the follow-up ministerial committee of the first ICO information ministers' conference.

The conference reaffirmed anew the need for the member states' strong bolstering of the information plan and the need for them to effectively participate in it in order to achieve success. The conference reaffirmed the need to approve the plan of action for fiscal year 1991-1992 which was submitted by the secretariat general and which was quoted from the informational plan. The conference addressed an appeal to the member states to pay their contributions and render the necessary assistance for implementing this program.

The conference expressed its deep concern over the deteriorating international economic situation and the consequences as far as the Islamic states are concerned. It noted with anxiety the new economic transformations that may take place following the establishment of the unified common market in 1994. The conference expressed its hope that the recent bolstering of relations between the European Community and eastern and central Europe will not have a negative impact on trade between the ICO member states and the European Community. The conference urged the member states to concentrate their efforts in the field of economic and commercial cooperation in order to bolster relations between the member states so as to confront international challenges.

The conference stressed the necessity of paying attention to the serious economic problems resulting from the recent war in the Gulf and demanded the discussion of firmer cooperation possibilities for reconstruction and economic development in a manner that limits the destructive consequences of this conflict.

The conference asked the member states to actively participate in preparing the international development strategy for the fourth UN development decade. It urged them to join the international system of trade privileges between the developed countries and to coordinate their negotiating positions in the framework of this system.

The conference asked the developed countries to take measures to achieve a world economic revival and to quicken the pace of the development process in the developing countries. It also urged the advanced countries and creditor institutions, whether national or multinational, to take adequate measures to cut debts incurred by the African countries, particularly through writing off debts, rescheduling repayment periods, extending repayment periods, and cutting or easing interest rates. The conference expressed the need for growing economic cooperation that will contribute to maintaining peace and stability between the member states.

The conference urged member states to continue their efforts to carry out the plan of action to strengthen cooperation between member states.

After being briefed about the activity of the permanent committee for economic and trade cooperation, the conference decided to recommend that the sixth Islamic summit due to be held in Dakar, Senegal, in 1991 issue a fresh mandate to the above committe to lay down a new strategy in the framework of the existing plan of action, taking into account the huge changes in the world since 1981 and their expected results on the economies of the member states.

The conference condemned the Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, the consequences of which extend to the environment and to the deterioration of living conditions for the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation.

The conference expressed its profound concern over the spread of the misuse of tranquilizing drugs and the illicit production of and trade in drugs, a matter that threatens the health and prosperity of millions of people, especially youth, in most countries of the world. The conference expressed the member states' profound anxiety regarding the increased use of tranquilizers in Islamic countries, a matter that threatens social and family structures in Muslim societies. The conference reaffirmed the necessity to strongly tackle the problem of misuse of tranquilizers in all forms and types so that this danger can be totally removed.

The conference placed great importance on the spread of Islamic culture and teachings, as well as Arabic and Islamic education. In this respect, the conference expressed its satisfaction with the progress made by the Islamic universities in Niger and Uganda as well as the universities of Malaysia and Bangladesh, which were established under the auspices of the ICO, despite the financial difficulties these universities face. The conference urged the member states, the Islamic Solidarity Fund, the Islamic Bank for Development, and other Islamic establishments to render financial and moral support to these universities, establishments, and centers in view of their ever increasing role in the development of manpower, which no developmental activities can do without.

The conference urged member states to take the necessary measures to secure all that is able to preserve the continuity of education in the occupied Arab lands, to protect Islamic heritage, and to express their full support for the education of the Palestinian people and its intifadah.

The conference urged all the member states and the Islamic financial institutions to extend help for the project of the new premises of the Ezzitouna University [as received] in Tunisia. The conference adopted the report of the secretary general regarding the activities of the Islamic Call and the reinvigoration of the Islamic action coordination committee. The conference also discussed the project of an advanced center for advanced medical studies and training in Bangladesh and asked the secretary general to continue the survey of the views of the member states and their remarks about the project.

The conference discussed a unified position on the practices of contempt for Islamic sanctities and values and it strongly condemned all individual or government positions that increase in any way any contempt for the sanctities of the heavenly religions, under the pretext of the freedom of belief, expression, and writing. It also discussed the respect for the principle of noninterference in the domestic affairs of other states.

The conference decided that the 21st session of the Islamic foreign ministers conference will be held in

Khartoum, Republic of Sudan, in 1992, at a date which will be determined in consultation between the host state and the secretary general.

Palestinian Affairs

Fatah's al-Hasan Calls for 'Arafat's Removal

LD1008165591 London KUNA in Arabic 1151 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Kuwait CIty, 10 Aug (KUNA)—The Kuwaiti paper AL- SIYASAH, citing Palestinian sources, reports that Fatah Central Committee member Khalid al-Hasan has demanded that PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat be brought to account over his alignment with Iraq during its occupation of Kuwait.

The sources disclosed to the paper today that Khalid al-Hasan has prepared a strongly worded memorandum for the Palestine National Council, which is due to meet in Algiers next month. In the memorandum he demands that Yasir 'Arafat be brought to account over his transgression of Palestinian legitimacy through his decision to align himself with Iraq during its invasion of Kuwait; that he be removed from the chairmanship of the organization; that the Executive Committee be dissolved; and that a provisional Palestinian government capable of catching up with the peace process be formed. According to the sources, the memorandum points out that 'Arafat's decision to align himself with Iraq was an individual one that he imposed on Executive Committee members from the first day of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. It says that the Executive Committee itself did not convene specifically to discuss the issue of the invasion and that from the first day 'Arafat discussed with it "what the stance of the organization would be should Iraq be subjected to a military strike". This confirms that the PLO chairman "took for granted" Palestinian alignment with Iraq from the first moment of the invasion.

Al-Hasan says in his memorandum that "the National Council should have been summoned for an extraordinary session in order to consult representatives of the Palestinian people over the organization's stance on the invasion." The memorandum gives an account of the losses sustained by the Palestinian people as a result of the PLO's alignment with Baghdad, be it losses to individuals, companies, or business. It also deals with the feelings of tens of thousands of Palestinian families who suddenly found themselves without a livelihood.

The memorandum spells out the political losses sustained by the organization and reviews the PLO's diplomatic standing before the invasion. It refers to "the peak of diplomatic endeavor" achieved with the beginning of the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue, which was suspended following reckless behavior.

Khalid al-Hasan's memorandum also discusses the isolation imposed upon the PLO amid the international moves to bring about peace and adds that Palestinians have found themselves to have no say in decisions of interest to the Palestinian cause.

The Palestinian sources, which AL-SIYASAH describes as informed, stated that al-Hasan's demands have extensive Palestinian support, although there are differences among a number of Palestinian factions in their call for the formation of a provisional Palestinian government and their commitment to keep the PLO and its political structures as a framework for Palestinian political action.

'Arafat: PLO Must Authorize Talks Participation

LD0908215191 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 8 Aug 91

[Text] Brother President Leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] has announced, in an interview published by the NEW YORK TIMES that no Palestinian will partipate in the peace conference without the PLO's authorization. He added: We are providing a historic opportunity to reach peace in the region, but such a peace will not be achieved without the Palestinians.

The brother president pointed out the impossible conditions which Israel has been making for the participation of Palestinians in the conference saying: I would like to see the same conditions to be applied to the rest of participants at the conference because the Palestinians constitute the main element in a peaceful solution in the Middle East. He wondered: Would Israel agree to negotiations taking place today with the Israeli peace movement without the Likud Government?

President leader Abu-'Ammar asserted that two of the Palestinians who met with the U.S. Secretary of State Baker, namely Faysal al- Husayni and Hana 'Ashrawi, could be chosen as members in a Palestinian delegation to the conference. He added: The PLO would also like to be able to appoint other delegates, including Palestinians living outside occupied territories.

The brother president stated, furthermore, that Israel should be prepared to remove all settlers from occupied Arab territories, including the Golan Heights. He went to say in this respect: East Jerusalem ought to be the capital of the independent Palestinian state; it is possible, however, that a confederation could be set up with Jordan if the two sides wish to do so.

He pointed out that the Palestine National Council will meet in Algiers next month to decide what should be done regarding the current peace initiative, stressing that if the organization has to decide against partaking in the conference no Palestinian will attend it.

'Arafat: Palestinians 'Hold Fast' to Peace Option

JN1008174291 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Brother Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine and head of the PLO Executive Committee, has reiterated that for all the PLO rank and file pressure to revert to armed struggle on account of attempts to bypass a Palestinian presence in the regional peace process, Palestinians hold fast to the peace option. In remarks to Radio London carried today, brother Yasir 'Arafat denounced Israel's ugly and inhumane practices against our Palestinian people inside the occupied territory using firearms and chemical and internationally banned gases. The Palestinians have opted against the use of firearms during the intifadah, but we must put everybody on notice that our patience has limits.

PLO To Decide on Conference Participation

LD1008195791 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 10 Aug

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Central Committee, has declared that the form of Palestinian participation will be decided by the PLO without any outside interference, and that the peace conference should implement the UN Security Council resolutions stipulating an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, foremost among which is holy Jerusalem.

Brother President Abu-'Ammar, in a speech today to the masses of the Palestinian people on the advent of the 45th month of the valiant intifadah, said that the United States is facing a test of its credibility in achieving peace. The unlimited U.S. support for Israel and the way it gives in to Israeli terms, he added, will increase the Zionist rulers' obstinacy and defiance of the peace conditions.

Brother leader Abu-'Ammar called on the masses of the people of Palestine to continue and escalate the popular intifadah in the face of Zionist terrorism and oppression and to extract the inalienable Palestinian rights, foremost among which is the sovereignty of our people in regard to holy Jerusalem.

National Council's al-Sa'ih on Peace Process

LD1108181491 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] The speaker of the Palestine National Council, [PNC], Shaykh 'Abd Al-Hamid al-Sa'ih, has affirmed that the question of Jerusalem is basic and vital, and nobody, be it the PLO or anyone else, can abandon or relinquish this matter, whether regarding the sovereignty over the holy city or its link with any delegation or any political discussion of its future.

In a statement broadcast by Tunis Radio in its weekly "Arab events" program, Shaykh al-Sa'ih said that the architects of the peace conference will not find one single Palestinian who will concede Jerusalem or ignore the fact the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestine people.

Asked if this Palestinian adherance to Jerusalem, in terms of issue and representation in all the stages of peace discussions, might lead to the failure of conference scheduled for October, Shaykh al-Sa'ih said that the PLO cannot concede Jerusalem whatever the consequence.

PLO's al-Hurani Praises Mubarak's Peace Policy

NC1008144791 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] PLO Executive Committee member 'Abdallah al-Hurani has praised the attitude of Egypt and the efforts of President Husni Mubarak to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. In a statement to a MENA correspondent in Tunis, al-Hurani said that President Mubarak's stand on the issue of Jerusalem demonstrates that this issue is not just a Palestinian concern but an Egyptian, Arab, and Islamic one as well, and that Israel cannot exclude it from the agenda of the peace conference.

Al-Hurani said that Mubarak's warning about the dangers of Israel's settlement policy, his rejection of this policy, his clear references to the indisputable role of the PLO, and his assertion that no Palestinian can participate in the peace conference without its authorization indicate the importance of Egypt's stand in formulating a unified Arab stand on the issues under discussion.

'Arafat Address Marks 45th Month of Intifadah

JN1108183991 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Address by PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat marking 45th month of the intifadah; place and date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [passage omitted] Valiant intifadah masses; authors of the epic of steadfastness and resistance and mounting, bold confrontation; children of our people holding firm in all sites of struggle and tenacity: In this critical and fateful stage, when the conspiracy and its partners are ganging up on our cause, the Palestinian knight that will not dismount remains the symbol of the pride of a nation and its will and faith and resolve. [passage omitted] Today ushers in a new month in the life of the intifadah with its flame burning more brightly than ever in the face of repression and terror. Today the voice of the intifadah roars to announce that, having flared, it will maintain the momentum, wave after wave, until the break of the dawn of freedom and independence, of dignity and pride. [passage omitted]

Our intifadah is continuing and escalating against a fascist enemy that brags about flying in the face of international legitimacy and finds succor and support from the United States and every day escalates its war against our masses. In the meantime, our intifadah proves that it has a unique capacity to formulate its own modes and forms, and to rejuvenate itself, face an occupation tempted by Arab collapse and unlimited U.S. support to carry on with its criminal practices. It steals our pure land where it settles new immigrants; it continues arrest campaigns; it aggresses against our sanctities; it violates the geographic and demographic unity of our country; and it aggravates the starvation and siege of our country. This is in addition to the blockade, imposed by some brothers in response to our principled pan-Arab stands, which seeks to force us to accept U.S.-Israeli conditions. [passage omitted]

Brothers and sisters: We now have in the intifadah a huge reservoir for our people, our cause, and our nation to draw upon. Hence the need to keep escalating the intifadah using all means at our disposal; hence the centrality of our national unity, which cannot be over stressed as the solid base of our blessed intifadah, that has brought our people from all walks of life into the melting pot of nationalist struggle headed for certain victory.

Heroic masses of our people and heroic strugglers: In these critical days, campaigns of pressures and psychological war aimed at our people and revolution are escalating, and campaigns of political and diplomatic siege are being stepped up. [passage omitted]

We have asserted that the objective of the conference should be to implement UN resolutions that stipulate Israeli withdrawal from all the 1967-occupied Palestinian territories, including holy Jerusalem. We have also asserted the need for acknowledging the national legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people, in accordance with international legitimacy, foremost being their right to self-determination.

We have asserted that the form of Palestinian representation at the conference will be defined by the PLO without any foreign interference. We also reasserted that Jerusalem and its Islamic and Christian holy places represent our red lines, and that any veto on Jerusalem is a veto of peace. Jerusalem must be present in substance and representation at all stages of peace.

We have also asserted that there is an unavoidable need for an immediate halt to all settlement activities in all the 1967-occupied Arab territories, including holy Arab Jerusalem.

Furthermore, we emphasized the need and importance of international protection for our people, masses, territory, and holy places. This attitude is in harmony with the essence of the Palestinian peace initiative of 1988. We asserted again our compliance with international legitimacy and its resolutions while Israel insists on violating this legitimacy and these resolutions. [passage omitted]

Sisters and brothers: In the past weeks, we have continued preparations for convening a new session of the Palestine National Council [PNC]—yes, to convene a new session of the PNC. Sisterly Algeria, as always, welcomed the idea of hosting that session next month. The PNC's Preparatory Committee is now adding the finishing touches to the conference so the representatives of the Palestinian people will bear their national and pan-Arab responsibilities at this fateful, crucial juncture of the history of our cause, people, and nation. [passage omitted]

Sisters, brothers, strugglers in the ranks of the Unified National Leadership, the strike forces, the women and youth and students committees, the children of the intifadah, workers, farmers, merchants, professionals, academicians, employees, vocationalists, and the brave detainees and valiant injured people: Our people's steadfastness, particularly in the past months, has begun to bear fruit. The unity of our people under the banner of the PLO and their strict adherence to their national inalienable rights has posed a great challenge to the United States. It either continues to pursue the policy of submission to Israeli blackmail and of applying double standards when dealing with international legitimacy or to respect international legitimacy and apply pressure on Israel to make it comply with the will of the international community. Let our masses understand that the most important basis is their faith, tenacity, strong will, stamina, and determination to continue to step up struggle by all ways and means. Do you understand? This is the basis, my brothers. [passage omitted]

Our struggling masses: Let us step up our intifadah and let our banners fly high. Let us strengthen the unity of our ranks to face all the wars of political and financial blockade and the psychological, media, and military wars. Let the streets of our cities, villages, and camps explode with strong popular anger, and let the whole world listen to the roar of the voice of the intifadah, which no other voice can rise above, to declare that it is an intifadah until the attainment of freedom and independence, and that it is a movement of steadfastness until victory. Dawn will soon break, and victory is imminent. [passage omitted]

U.S.-Palestinian Talks on Memorandum Reported

LD1008211391 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] An official Palestinian source declared yesterday that under the commission of the PLO, a Palestinian team composed of brother Faysal al-Husayni and sister Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi held a working meeting today with the U.S. State Department team charged with discussing the memorandum of understanding which will be presented by the United States.

The source added that the Palestinian team emphasized the exploratory and procedural nature of the meeting in view of the fact that there is a certain Palestinian perception of the place and method of discussion of the formulation of the memorandum. The Palestinian team, the source added, reemphasized to the U.S. team the Palestinian national positions which were defined by the PLO and constitute the indispensible requirements and prerequisites for the success of the peace process.

U.S.-Israeli Memorandum of Understanding Analyzed

LD1008225691 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] A report in the Egyptian daily AL-WAFD, claiming to be the full text of the Israeli-U.S. memorandum of understanding, reveals in its 10 points—if this text is genuine—a terrifying and startling U.S. stand that makes any understanding between Washington, Syria, Jordan, and the Palestinians, unbelievable.

The apparent and declared aim of the 10 Israli-U.S. points is the total and direct destruction of the minimum of understanding with most Arab concessionary and moderate stands according to the prevailing pragmatic political logic. If so, what would be the case with the Palestinian side in particular?

The UN Security Council was and still is the brilliant star in the Gulf operation, since it was a crisis until it became a war, then ended with the imposition of sanctions on Iraq. This international star was and still is the ceiling and the floor for the international legitimacy, on top of which the United States stands among the large shadows of what it terms the new international order.

How could all this be bypassed and the United States itself make a commitment to Israel—according to the first point of the memorandum of understanding—that the UN Security Council will never convene to discuss the Arab-Israeli conflict while insisting on direct bilateral talks? And how can the United States be truly commited to presenting the talks from resulting in an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, only to merely artificial alterations to the borders, as is stipulated in the second point?

U.S. President George Bush, within the principle of land for peace, considered the settlements as an obstacle on the path of peace. This is now turned upside down. The U.S. commitment upon which there is an understanding in the famous document stresses the words of Yitzhak Shamir, prime minister of the enemy: Peace is for peace only; the settlements will continue as they are, and Israel will not withdraw even an inch of land under the pretext of the land of Israel.

Regarding international legitimacy—which centers around the powers of the UN Security Council, its resolutions, and its immediate practical arangements and even brute force—it is empty regarding this Arab-Israeli matter, and has no international, legitimate, or practical meaning.

Yet we are still waiting for the texts of the American-Syrian, American-Jordanian, American-Egyptian, American-Saudi, and our American-Palestinian memorandums so that we can know how this understanding will be in the context of all the intended stands.

Algeria To Employ Palestinians Leaving Kuwait

JN1108092791 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 11 Aug 91 pp 18, 15

[By Sa'd al-Silawi]

[Text] Palestinian Ambassador to Algeria Mundhir al-Dajani [Abu-al-'Izz] has praised Algeria's support for the Palestine question.

Ambassador al-Dajani stressed that Algeria's stand on the peace process is closely linked with the PLO stand and that Algeria supports PLO decisions and publicly endorses PLO stands.

On reemploying Palestinians returning from Kuwait in Arab Maghreb countries, Mundhir al-Dajani said: During a meeting with the Algerian prime minister and foreign minister, we requested help for the Palestinians who left Kuwait by creating job opportunities for them in Algeria.

The Palestinian ambassador added that despite the difficult economic situation in Algeria, the Algerian leadership promised to exert every effort to absorb all the job seekers it needs in various specialities.

The ambassador said that the Algerian leadership stressed to Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine, during his visit to Algeria, its absolute commitment to helping the Palestinians who lost their jobs as a result of the Gulf crisis.

Responding to a question on the requested professions and the number of those who applied for jobs through the Palestinian embassy in Amman, Mundhir al-Dajani said that emphasis is being put on medicine, engineering, and education in order to cover Algeria's needs. He said absolute priority will be given to Palestinians who left their businesses in Kuwait. He said 1,500-2,000 applications have been submitted by doctors, engineers, and teachers. He said he will take these applications to Algeria where they will be reviewed by a special Algerian committee.

Algeria

'Abd-al-Majid Arrives, Meets With Ibrahimi

LD1108205991 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Has the Arab nation used up all its resources and efforts for rearranging the Arab house? 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, the new Arab league secretary general does not believe this, but bets on continuous work for the establishment of agreement instead of rift, even if the path is difficult. The beginning of the Maghreban tour is from Algiers. Over to Nacera Ait-Salah:

[Ait-Salah] Arab league Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid arrived as Algeria's guest today on his first official visit to our country, which is to last 24 hours.

[Begin recording] [Ait-Salah] What is the aim of your visit to the Arab Maghreb region?

['Abd-al-Majid] First, I would like to express my pleasure at visiting Algeria today. The visit comes within the framework of a tour I am making of the Arab Maghreb states, which I started in Tunisia, and will, God willing, encompass Morocco and Mauritania. This visit is first to present thanks and express consideration for Algeria's support for my election to the post of Arab league secretary general, and also I will be honored to meet his excellency the president of the republic, Mr. Chadli Bendjedid, and listen to his directives with regard to a common Arab action in the forthcoming stage. I will also hold consultations with [word indistinct] Mr. Lakhdar Ibrahimi, the foreign minister, on the general Arab situation and the developments which are currently taking place in the region.

[Ait-Salah] Is it true that an Arab emergency summit will be held in the next few days?

['Abd-al-Majid] I mentioned that the convening of the Arab summit comes within the competence of the heads of states, and I have no knowledge of this issue.

[Ait-Salah] What is your view about the peace conference proposed by the United States?

['Abd-al-Majid] First, with regard to the peace conference, the Arab stance is very clear, because there is an eagerness for the achievement of a just peace in the region. I believe that all the Arab states agree on the adoption of this stance, particularly after the Syrian's reply to the message of the U.S. President. In this regard, if the aim of the peace conference is effectively the achievement of a just and honorable peace, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all the occupied Arab territories as far as Jerusalem is concerned, and the granting of the Palestinian people their right to self-determination, we welcome (?such a) conference. [end recording]

Immediately after his arrival in Algiers, Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid held talks in Djenane El-Mithak with our foreign minister, Lakhdar Ibrahimi.

Reaction to Western Sahara Military Operations

LD1108170291 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] A spokesman for our Foreign Ministry stated today that Algeria deeply regrets the renewal of military operations in the Western Sahara and renews its total support for the peace process under the auspices of the UN secretary general.

In a statement made to APS, the Foreign Ministry spokesman said that while Algeria adds its voice to the positive reception accorded the UN Security Council's adoption of resolution 690 on the Western Sahara at the end of last April, it shares the profound concern expressed by Secretary General Perez de Cuellar over the grave developments in this area.

Socialist Forces Leader on Bendejedid Meeting

PM0908142591 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 7 Aug 91 p 5

[Randah Taqiy-al-Din report: "Ait-Ahmed Tells AL-HAYAH: Chadli Emphasized Elections Would Be Held In November"]

[Excerpts] Hocine Ait-Ahmed, leader of the Algerian Socialist Forces, said in a statement to AL-HAYAH yesterday following his meeting with Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid that the latter pledged to hold legislative elections in Algeria in November. He accused "some of those around" Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali of playing "a dangerous game." Ait-Ahmed said that the meeting with Bendjedid was held at his request in order to "clarify the question of legislative elections in Algeria and set a date for them" and that he also raised the Palestinian issue and the problem of East Jerusalem's representation in the peace conference proposed to resolve the Middle East crisis.

He added that Bendjedid pledged at the meeting to "fulfill his promises and to work to respect the democratic transformation. He also promised to hold legislative elections in November and to announce a date at the end of the month or in September."

He pointed out that Bendjedid emphasized to him that the state of emergency currently imposed on the country would be lifted once a date for the legislative elections is announced.

Ait-Ahmed expressed his satisfaction at Chadli's response to the clarifications he had requested, especially his assertion that "no presidential elections can be held in the country before the legislative elections, and that those elections will be held."

Ait-Ahmed said that he emphasized to Chadli that the policy to be pursued by his Front will be peaceful and will not rely on violence. He described Ghozali as a frank and trustworthy man, but he expressed concern that "some of those around him are playing a dangerous game."

On the Palestinian issue, Ait-Ahmed said that his meeting with Bendjedid reflected identical views with regard to the concerns related to it as well as identical views on the need to convene the peace conference and the need not to miss this opportunity.

He emphasized the need not to exclude the PLO from the peace conference. [passage omitted]

He justified his severe criticisms of the government by saying that it should have "confronted this serious crisis right from the beginning. When any Islamic [Salvation] Front calls for jihad against the government, it should arrest him because he is inciting violence and revolt. The government should not have allowed violence to escalate and turn into a serious explosion."

He said: "Our strategy differs totally from that of the ruling party in confronting the Islamic Front. Ours stipulates that we should not allow it to monopolize the opposition, but at the same time its members' practices should be peaceful and based on human rights."

He said that the Islamic Front members who are responsible for what happened "must stand trial before civilian courts, because we are convinced that many tricks were played by the secret services."

Ait-Ahmed called for disbanding Islamic Front militias because of their danger. But he also expressed his concerns about the secret services' activities, because "we are convinced that the parties belonging to the regime do not want legislative elections." [passage omitted]

As to the method he would use to confront the Islamic Front if he were prime minister, Ait-Ahmed said that he would continue to "suppress troublemakers, but would allow the parties working for the sake of the democratic march to stage demonstrations, because that would lead to mobilizing the Algerian people against the Islamic Front's activities."

On his vision of a way out of the present crisis, he said that this is possible, namely by Chadli's honoring his pledge to hold legislative elections and lift the state of siege.

He expressed his belief that Ghozali is fully aware of what his government officials' intentions are. "He is an experienced man and understands the situation. But perhaps other forces which he cannot control are working to prevent the organization of the legislative elections."

National Liberation Front Politburo Meets

LD1108015391 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] The Political Bureau of the National Liberation Front [FLN] today held its first meeting since the reelection of its members the day before yesterday during the resumption of the Central Committee ordinary session. The meeting was held in camera. According to sources informed about the meeting, the session focused on drawing up the agenda for the Political Bureau and setting up two committees: one to prepare for the extraordinary congress and the second to prepare for the upcoming legislative elections.

The extraordinary congress of the FLN will be held after the legislative elections scheduled before the end of the current year, press sources say.

National Assembly To Debate Budget 12 Aug

LD1108091991 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] The National Assembly will convene tomorrow in an extraordinary session at the request of the head of government. The sesion will debate the 1991 supplementary budget law. The law prepares the basis for a framework of government action in the current phase to confront repercussions of the economic crisis.

Egypt

'Large-Scale' Muslim-Copt Sedition Threatened

NC0908173491 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 7 Aug 91 p 3

[Report by Mustafa al-Sa'id and 'Abd-al-Rahim 'Ali]

[Excerpt] A new wave of pamphlets threatening to attack the police, the Copts, and state officials have swept through al-Minya. They threatened to incite a large-scale sectarian sedition if the security organs do not release a number of leaders of extremist groups.

The appearance of the pamphlets coincided with the continued calls for armed revolution in a number of al-Minya mosques. Last week, a number of extremists proved the seriousness of their threats when they tried to attack the house of state security organs officers Lieutenant Colonel Jamal 'Abd-al-Hafiz and Maj. Ahmad Salah. But the police acted quickly and apprehended 10 extremists who were handed over to the prosecution. They admitted that they received orders from their group leader to attack police officers and video shops.

The pamphlets distributed by the extremists included clear threats to create a large-scale sectarian sedition. They said that much blood will be shed if the security organs do not release their detained leaders.

In an interview with AL-AHALI, al-Minya Governor Maj. Gen. said that all the executive and popular organs have taken measures to contain any attempt to incite sedition. He said that the organs' interest even includes ordinary disputes and fights involving Muslims and Christians. He added: The extremists are trying to exploit ordinary disputes to give them a sectarian dimension. This is why he asked that he be immediately informed of any such disputes and also asked local councils, People's Assembly members, and executive organs to solve such disputes before the extremist groups get involved in them.

A senior security official confirmed that the extremists moved from their old strongholds to the city outskirts and remote villages and that they are trying to provoke Copts by issuing pamphlets calling for attacking them. The senior official stressed that the main aim is to embarrass and pressure the security organs. He noted that some extremists had in the past seized Copts in the university and presented a number of demands in return for their release.

Where do these groups get their financing, if we suppose that backing for them from abroad has been cut off? The security official said they are always collecting contributions for building mosques or for social activities. But no one knows where these contributions end up. They also go in groups to those who are returning from abroad and pressure them to contribute part of the money they bring from abroad. [passage omitted]

Suspected Members of al-Shawqiyun Group Arrested

*NC0908184891 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic
7 Aug 91 p 3*

[Report by Fakhir Mahmud]

[Excerpt] A search is under way for seven leaders of the extremist al-Shawqiyun group in al-Fayyum who succeeded in escaping a huge police dragnet last week. More than 200 citizens were detained during the operation on suspicion of belonging to the extremist group. Orders have been issued for the arrest of 25 of them while the rest are still detained in police stations.

Some weapons and ammunition were discovered during the police raid on the village of Abu-Shanab and other villages in the Kahk area. Group leader 'Ali 'Abd-al-Wahhab and Ramadan Mustafa Muhammad, one of the group's military leaders, escaped. The police discovered weapons and ammunition in Ramadan Muhammad's house and destroyed part of the walls in their search for more weapons.

The police are continuing their combing operations in search of the escapees. They have also set up search posts, particularly at the Kawm Awsim traffic point at the entrance of the desert road that leads to Cairo.

The clash between the police and the al-Shawqiyun group occurred following the discovery by a state security intelligence officer of a plan by the group to initiate violent actions. The Abu-Shanab villagers said the discovery was by coincidence, because the officer was looking for one of the leaders of al-Jihad wanted after escaping from al-Minya.

The arrest of the al-Shawqiyun group members was done without loss of life this time. The security forces were keen on avoiding a repetition of the massacre that took place in Kahk during Ramadan and claimed the lives of 32 members of the al-Shawqiyun group following clashes involving machine guns and automatic guns. [passage omitted]

Mubarak Letter to Shamir Lists 'Bases of Peace'

*JN0908133691 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic
1200 GMT 9 Aug 91*

[Mustafa Bakri dispatch from Cairo]

[Text] Egyptian sources in the know have told our radio that in the past few days Egyptian President Husni Mubarak sent a message Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, in which he stressed the need to repress and cancel any Israeli conditions prior to the commencement of the peace process.

The Egyptian president, moreover, defined the bases of peace in the following points:

1. Israel should halt settlement building.

2. Israel should demonstrate its readiness to withdraw from the Golan and southern Lebanon.

3. Israel should acknowledge the rights of Palestinians in the occupied territories.

In his message, Mubarak asserted that these points represent the basic axis of the negotiations process. He also asked Shamir to put forward practical and constructive proposals on the above bases. Mubarak pointed out that Israel's rejection of any of these bases means the collapse of the peace process before it starts.

Furthermore, President Mubarak denounced the escalation of Israeli suppressive measures against Palestinians and the plans being carried out by Israeli Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon to set up more settlements in the occupied territories.

Mubarak also asserted that if Israel wishes to attend the peace conference as a guest of honor, then the Arabs will never welcome this. He added that the conference has its consequences and steps.

Mubarak said that if there is no agreement on the consequences of peace, then holding the conference cannot be considered an end to a beginning that has not yet happened.

In his message, the Egyptian president also explained that the Arab countries are now willing to give the necessary guarantees for Israeli security. In return, Israel should demonstrate a willingness to give the Arabs the necessary guarantees for their rights. The Egyptian president hoped that Shamir would give due consideration and thorough examination to what is contained in his message, so that all opportunities to bring about enduring stability in the region would not be lost.

Soviet Immigrant Arrested for Illegal Entry

NC1008205691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2035 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Cairo, 10 Aug (MENA)—Egyptian security authorities arrested a Russian immigrant to Israel as he was trying to enter Egyptian territory by crossing the wire marking the border with Israel in the Tabah area.

The Jewish immigrant, whose name is Gennadiy Shindi [name as received], told the security men he was fleeing to Egypt from Israel because of the mistreatment he received there, adding that he wishes to live in Egypt because of the democracy it enjoys. He noted that he had arrived in Israel on 7 March and worked at the Israeli Scientific Research Ministry. He added that he was trying to enter Egypt illegally because he had no passport, as the Israeli authorities had taken it away and given him an identity card instead.

Daily Editor Denounces Israeli Minister's Remarks

NC1108072691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2200 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Cairo, 10 Aug (MENA)—AL-AKHBAR Chief Editor Jalal Duwaydar denounced the strange and suspicious statement by Refa'el Eytan, Israeli agriculture minister and former chief of staff, in which he called for solving the Palestinian problem by settling them in Sinai.

In an article to be published Sunday, Duwaydar wrote that Eytan seems to have forgotten that Israeli designs on the Sinai territories and its aggression against the Palestinians were the direct cause for all the wars that Egypt fought, the last of which being the October war in which Israel suffered a resounding defeat. Duwaydar reminded Eytan of what could have happened to Israel in that glorious war had the United States not come to its rescue.

The chief editor added that Egypt pursues the road of peace because it is not an advocate of war and destruction. Egypt, therefore, aspired to establish stability in the region and to end the state of tension that existed for almost 45 years in the hope that Israel and its leaders would go along with these efforts. It seems, unfortunately, that some of its leaders still believe that Israel can only survive in an atmosphere of war and aggression against other nations' rights, he said, adding that people like Eytan must understand that the Government and people of Egypt reject in form and substance such proposals which run contrary to all norms. We view this statement as an aggressive act against Egyptian sovereignty, he stressed, noting that Egypt's territories are sacred. We are ready to go all the way to defend them, he added.

We are tired of blaming such unreasonable and contemptible Israeli behavior on the conflict between hawks and doves, Duwaydar added, noting that it has become very clear that this conflict is nothing more than a game.

Duwaydar concluded by saying that peace cannot remain a captive to this abhorrent Israeli game which aims to undermine international legitimacy.

Al-Qadhdhafi Admonishes Mubarak on Levi Visit

NC0908153591 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 7 Aug 91 p 1

[By Philip Jallab from Tripoli]

[Excerpts] The dialogue between President Husni Mubarak and Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi began with an admonishment from the latter on two issues:

The first concerns the visit by Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi to Egypt during the presence of the Libyan ministerial delegation in Cairo. Col. al-Qadhdhafi said that Egypt has the right to do what it wants and to try to deal even with the Israelis, but Levi's presence embarrassed the visiting Libyan delegation.

The second concerns the problems caused by Egyptian customs personnel, who are refusing to allow Libyan goods into Egypt.

The discussion of the problems caused by the customs personnel ended with an agreement on repealing customs and opening borders to citizens and goods. So that no one will think the opening of borders means freedom for the illicit movement of criminals between the two countries, the two sides agreed to form a joint security committee to ensure freedom of movement for the regular public. [passage omitted on planned projects]

As a senior-level Libyan official, namely Major 'Abd-al-Salam Jallud, told us, it is no secret the Egyptian-Libyan talks stemmed from the premise that the Egypt-Libya-Sudan triangle is an example of Arab economic integration and is a strategic issue regardless of the differences in the ruling systems. These three countries have all the requisites for comprehensive, integrated economic development in its modern concept, such as human resources, industrial and agricultural expertise, land, water, raw materials, and large markets that can absorb the expected production while the surplus would be exported.

Maj. Jallud said Libya stresses that relations with Sudan are not limited to a single political movement, but involve all the political forces inside and outside the government.

Al-Qadhdhafi Envoy Invites Mubarak to Festival

NC1108124891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0938 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Alexandria, 11 Aug (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received Mustafa al-Kharrubi, member of the Libyan Revolution Command Council, Ahmad Qadhdhaf-al-Damm, general coordinator of Egyptian-Libyan relations; and the head of the Arab Affairs Desk at the Libyan External Liaison Committee, at the Ra's al-Tin Palace in Alexandria today.

Qadhdhaf-al-Damm said that the meeting was held in the context of the continued consultations between brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, and his brother President Husni Mubarak.

Qadhdhaf-al-Damm said that al-Kharrubi came to Egypt to invite President Mubarak to attend the celebrations marking the inauguration of the Great River project on 28 August. The river will bring water to areas located as far as 2,000 km from the source, he noted.

Col. al-Qadhdhafi addressed similar invitations to a number of Arab and foreign leaders.

Restrictions Placed on Travel to Libya

NC1108092391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0645 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Matruh, 11 Aug (MENA)—At midnight last night, Egyptian authorities opened a checkpoint in the al-Sallum area to check the names of people traveling to Libya, a standard practice at Egypt's regular passport sections.

Matruh Governor Major General Kamal Mansur said that the new system was introduced to enable the security organs to monitor the travel of persons wanted by police.

Libyan authorities have established a similar checkpoint between the cities of Tobruk and Musa'id.

In addition, a decision was made to charge any Libyan car entering Egypt 37 Egyptian pounds worth of insurance. A similar measure is already in effect for Egyptian cars entering Libya.

Palestinian Delegation Departs After 4-Day Visit

NC0908132991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1238 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] Cairo, 9 Aug (MENA)—A Palestinian delegation led by PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, left Cairo this afternoon for Tunis after a four-day visit to Egypt. During the visit, the Palestinian delegation members met with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs.

Mubarak Receives Call From Yemeni President

NC1108150991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1425 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Cairo, 11 Aug (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received a telephone call from Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih this afternoon. The two leaders discussed recent developments and bilateral ralations.

Kuwait To Finance Agriculture Project in Sinai

NC1108063391 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0335 GMT 11 Aug 91

[From the press review]

[Text] In the framework of Egyptian-Kuwaiti cooperation, AL-AHRAM notes that the Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development loaned Egypt 655 million Egyptian pounds [approximately $200 million] at 2.5-percent interest to finance the second phase of al-Salam irrigation canal and to undertake development projects near the canal in northern Sinai. The investment will lead to the cultivation of 1,400 feddans east of the Suez Canal and to the creation of new urban centers.

AL-AHRAM reports that the second phase of the al-Salam canal will be completed in five years, adding that the first phase of the canal will be inaugurated in September.

Military Cooperation Discussed With Japanese

NC1208103991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1005 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Text] Cairo, 12 Aug (MENA)—Lieutenant General Salah Halabi, Armed Forces chief of staff, and a Japanese delegation led by Deputy Defense Minister (Kazo Igoshi) discussed ways of of strengthening military cooperation between Egypt and Japan.

The Japanese official visited the October war memorial and the military college. He arrived in Cairo yesterday on a one-day visit.

Mubarak Chairs Session on Banking Sector, BCCI

NC1108150891 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Excerpt] President Mubarak today chaired a meeting at the Presidential Palace in Ra's al-Tin which was attended by the prime minister, the deputy prime minister and minister of agriculture and land reclamation, various other ministers, Egyptian state bank governors, and a representative of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International [BCCI]

Commenting after the meeting, Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif said that the participants discussed a number of issues, particularly the banking sector's level of performance and services, its role in bolstering the economic reform program, and its success in attracting deposits from Egyptians at home and abroad. He added that the BCCI representative and the Central Bank governor delivered comprehesive briefings on the bank's situation and the steps taken through the Egyptian state banks to support BCCI's operations in Egypt. He noted that President Mubarak was also briefed on the decisions reached between the state banks' governors and the Central Bank in this regard. Mubarak asked that clear rules be established to prevent any tampering or favoritism in cashing depositors' checks. He also requested that a timetable for depositors' withdrawals of funds be announced. [passage omitted]

Libya

Jallud Says Relations With U.S. 'Still Tense'

*NC0908153891 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic
7 Aug 91 p 1*

[Text] Major 'Abd-al-Salam Jallud has told AL-AHALI that there has been no change in Libyan-U.S. relations, which are still tense despite Egyptian mediation efforts.

Jallud added: The United States accuses Libya of being inflexible. In the American lexicon, adherence to independence and protection of pan-Arab interests and national dignity is equated with inflexibility.

Western Sahara

Moroccan Moves Said To Prevent UN Deployment

*LD1008085591 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in Arabic 0600 GMT 10 Aug 91*

[Excerpt] A communique issued by the Saharan Ministry of Information stated yesterday that preparations are under way for a fresh Moroccan military aggression against the Saharan Democratic Arab Republic liberated territories. Such a military operation, the Saharan communique further asserted, is aimed at preventing the deployment of the first UN units entrusted with organizing the referendum in Western Sahara, which should arrive before a cease- fire—which had been accepted by both Morocco and the Polisario Front—is in force.

The Moroccan provocations, the communique added, are aimed at torpedoing the peace process and a peaceful settlement of the conflict. [passage omitted]

Polisario on Troop Movements

*LD1008131891 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in Arabic 1200 GMT 10 Aug 91*

Text] The Polisario Front today announced that Morocco was currently preparing to launch other attacks on Sahraoui positions. The Sahraoui ambassador in Algiers [Ibrahim Hakim] said that around 200,000 Moroccan troops were now amassed at five Sahraoui positions in preparation to execute the aforementioned attacks. Ibrahim Hakim said the objective behind all this was to prevent the deployment of the UN mission in the region before the cease-fire is put into force on 6 September as previously decided.

The UN secretary general yesterday expressed his great concern over the developments in Western Sahara.

More on Polisario's Stand

*LD1008210291 Madrid RNE-1 Radio Network
in Spanish 1800 GMT 10 Aug 91*

[Text] [Announcer] Representatives of the Polisario Front [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro] in Spain have issued a communique saying that Morocco is carrying out intensive military preparations to attack the Western Sahara in the next few days. A report on this from Angeles Bazan:

[Bazan] The Polisario Front believes that Morocco's military action is aimed at preventing the preparations for the deployment of the UN forces which will monitor the cease-fire that comes into effect on 6 September. With this military escalation, adds the Polisario Front, Morocco is trying to undermine the process of the peaceful resolution of the conflict in the Western Sahara, a process which was agreed jointly by the Saharans and the Moroccan Government with the support of the United Nations, and which will culminate in the referendum for the self-determination of the Western Sahara. In its communique the Polisario Front concludes by calling on the international community to stop Morocco in this new interference and make it return to the path of peace.

[Announcer] We now have the Polisario Front delegate in Spain, Hash Ahmed, on the line. Good evening.

[Ahmed] Good evening.

[Announcer] You say that the Moroccan Army is preparing an armed offensive against the Western Sahara before the agreed regional cease-fire comes into effect on 6 September. What information do you have to suggest this military intervention?

[Ahmed] Well, they are certainly carrying out very intensive preparations. There are troop movements along all the walls. There is a concentration of troops and war materiel, and the latest air operations by the Moroccan Air Force are, in our view, preparing the ground for a land offensive. Different points have been bombed, among them Tifariti. As you also know, in one of these operations some aircraft were brought down and a Moroccan captain was captured. All the information we have in this respect confirms the imminence of a land offensive—in the next few days.

[Announcer] Mr. Ahmed, does it not seem odd to you that Morocco should begin an offensive at this time, just after having agreed a cease-fire with the Polisario Front, and on the eve of the international forces being deployed in the region to guarantee the free development of the referendum?

[Ahmed] Well, of course, it is an attitude and a conduct which are not right in the present circumstances in view of the fact that there has been a peace process, a unilateral truce (?accepted) by the Polisario at the express request of the UN Secretary-General, and above all, a request to both sides that from now until 6 September they do not do anything which could upset the climate of calmness and appeasement, which should exist before the deployment of the United Nations. I should also say that a UN military mission coincided with these military operations by Morocco, and of course we consider this not only an attack on the Saharans, but also an attack on the United Nations itself when there are just a few days to go to the deployment of the international force.

[Announcer] Given the evidence that you have that there really is going to be an intervention, what is the Polisario Front going to do? Are you going to take recourse to an international body—the United Nations, for example?

[Ahmed] Yes. We have already presented a denunciation via a letter from the Secretary General of the Polisario, the Saharan President, Abdelaziz, to the UN Secretary-General, in which he describes the situation, and asks for the immediate UN intervention to prevent this situation from reaching unpredictable levels. This is what has been asked for, and we hope that the United Nations and the Security Council itself take the appropriate steps. This is what we have done.

[Announcer] Hash Ahmed, delegate of the Polisario Front in Spain, many thanks for answering the call from RNE. Good evening.

[Ahmed] Good evening.

'Former' Polisario Members Reveal Group's 'Plot'

LD1008175991 Rabat MAP in English 1347 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Rabat, Aug. 10 - (MAP)—Mohammed Salem Ould Hedda Ould Ali and Saleh Biba Brahim, respectively former head of section and chief of a mechanized unit within the 'Polisario' [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia el Hamra and Rio de Oro] ranks revealed a new plot elaborated by the mercenaries aiming at creating an atmosphere of terror and insecurity in an ultimate hopeless attempt to hamper the process of the referendum in the Sahara.

In an interview with MAP, the two former 'Polisario' members who recently managed to run away from the Tinduf camps to Morocco explained that the plot has been elaborated since the United Nations announced the organizing of a referendum in the Sahara, which obliged the mercenaries to completely modify their military strategy.

They said in this respect that the military units were reduced to three instead of six or seven and were isolated from the population in a bid to avoid any contact with the Moroccan Sahrawis who no longer hide their disagreement with the 'Polisario' leaders.

Mohammed Salem and Saleh Biba also said that these units receive a commando training to enable them perpetrate terrorist operations through two battalions: "Group 17" in charge of massacres of Sahraouis held in Lahmada camps since the October 1988 uprising, and a second group made up of 300 youth under 18 who undertook a special training in Cuba.

They further said that the mercenaries have tried to introduce members of these two battalions in the no man's land situated between the defence wall and the borders Morocco has with Algeria and Mauritania.

This operation seeks to create an atmosphere of terror to exert pressure on the citizens when the voting stage starts. It also seeks to make Morocco responsible for terrorist action these two groups would perpetrate when the referendum proper begins.

The two former 'Polisario' members further said that the combing operation undertaken recently by the Moroccan Royal Armed Forces in the no man's land zone was timely and will no doubt foil the plots of the mercenaries.

Mohammed Salem and Saleh Biba who left their families in the 'Polisario' camps and reached Morocco after walking long distances called on the United Nations Organization and international public opinion to help lift the state of siege imposed on the sequestered population in Tinduf.

Set up in 1975, the 'Polisario' separatist movement claimed sovereignty over the Moroccan Saharan provinces formerly under Spanish rule.

Having failed to assert itself at the military level as the Royal Armed Forces unwaveringly defended the country's territorial integrity, the 'Polisariao' accepted the organizing, under the UNO aegis, of the self-determination referendum proposed by King Hassan II as early as 1981.

The UN secretary general is finalizing modalities for the referendum.

Kuwait

Cabinet Sets Up Demographic Policy Committee

LD1108181891 London KUNA in Arabic 1512 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 11 Aug (KUNA)—Kuwait today hailed the outcome and resolutions of the Islamic Conference Organization forign ministers' meeting that concluded its proceedings in Istanbul last week, renewing its condemnation of the Iraqi regime for its treacherous aggression against Kuwait, and demanding the immediate release of prisoners and the implementation of all UN Security Council resolutions relating to Kuwait.

This was stated at a meeting of the Council of Ministers held today under the chairmanship of Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister. [passage omitted]

Dhari al-'Uthman, minister of state for cabinet affairs, pointed out that in light of the great attention the state pays to the subject of demographic composition, the Council of Ministers has decided to form a ministerial committee under the chairmanship of the minister of planning, with the participation of the minister of state for cabinet affairs and the ministers of finance, interior, social affairs and labor, and trade and industry. The committee will undertake a study of all aspects of this urgent issue and draw up an integrated and clear demographic policy that takes into account all emerging realities and conditions brought about by the treacherous Iraqi aggression, contributes to comprehensive development, and ensures the security, stability, and continued progress and prosperity of the country. [passage omitted]

The minister added that the Council of Ministers also approved the retirement of a number of army and police officers as part of the current efforts at the Defense and Interior Ministries to promote the level of work and upgrade performance. The council also discussed various other subjects and made the appropriate decisions.

Official Says GCC To Maintain Gulf Security

LD1208102491 London KUNA in Arabic 0946 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Text] Kuwait, 12 Aug (KUNA)—Deputy Defense Minister Faysal al-Dawud said in a statement published here today that the primary responsibility for Gulf security will be shouldered by the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states in cooperation with Syria and Egypt, due to their position and standing in the Arab world.

In a statement to AL-SIYASAH, al-Dawud indicated that there is no intention of establishing U.S. bases. Experts will, however, be needed because there is U.S. military equipment and so that Kuwaiti youths can be trained in maintenance of this equipment. He added that the Kuwaiti Defense Ministry is rebuilding the army while relying fully on Kuwaiti citizens. He recalled what had been announced by the defense minister regarding studying the possible use of Kuwaiti woman in the ministry.

Oman

BCCI Branches Closed To Protect Depositors

JN1008140491 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] His Excellency Qays 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Zawawi, deputy prime minister for financial and economic affairs, said that the closure of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International [BCCI] branches operating in the Sultanate of Oman is a precautionary measure to protect the rights of depositors in the Sultanate and to prevent any negative effect on the Omani economy.

His Excellency Qays 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Zawawi added that the royal directives of His Majesty Sultan Qabus stipulate that all measures be taken to safeguard depositors' rights.

His excellency said that the banks operating in the Sultanate play a major role in developing the national economy and that his majesty's government has drawn up the necessary plans to protect these banks on the one hand, and to monitor their operations and sound performance on the other.

In conclusion, his excellency said: We want to reassure everyone that the government encourages and approves doing business with national Omani banks and with the branches of foreign banks in the Sultanate, and that there is no cause for worry over a person's interests when dealing with these banks and financial institutions, which are licensed to operate in the Sultanate according to financial laws in place. He added that the Omani Central Bank has taken all measures to enforce these laws for the good of investors and depositors alike.

Yemen

Salih, 'Arafat Discuss Arab, World Developments

JN1108131891 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, today received struggler brother Yasir 'Arafat, president of the State of Palestine. They talked about Arab and international developments, with a special emphasis on the Palestinian issue, and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's efforts to set up a regional peace conference. The two expressed their support for the conference with the proviso that it sets out to promote the national rights of the Palestinian people as stipulated by international legitimacy and UN resolutions, above all those pertaining to self-determination and a Palestinian state with

Jerusalem as its capital. They stressed the need to invoke the principle of territory for peace.

Brother Yasir 'Arafat pointed out to the brother chairman the dimensions of the Israeli plot to Judaize Jerusalem and its sanctities and to annex them to Israel. He also noted that Israel is intensifying settlement building in the occupied Arab land, and familiarized the chairman with developments in the intifadah and the repression and oppression of Palestinians by Zionist occupation forces.

The brother chairman stressed the need for a fair, and durable settlement involving all the parties, led by the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. He stressed that Jerusalem is an integral part of the occupied Palestinian land. Any bargaining over Jerusalem, declared the chairman, will add up to a plot against the Arab nation and Islamic sanctities. He stressed that settlement activity in the occupied Arab territory, especially in Jerusalem, must be brought to an immediate halt. Settlement building, he noted, is in clear breach of international legitimacy and hardly helps ongoing efforts to advance the peace process. The brother president reiterated our country's support for the struggle and intifadah of our Palestinian Arab people to promote their self- determination, rights, and statehood.

The meeting was attended by President 'Arafat's advisor, brother Bassam Abu-Sharif, and the State of Palestine's ambassador in Sanaa.

'Arafat Calls U.S. Plan To Meet Goals Failure

NC1008192991 Paris AFP in English 1900 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Sanaa, Aug 10 (AFP)—Palestine Liberation Organization head Yasir 'Arafat on Saturday said the U.S. Middle East peace plan failed to meet Palestinian goals, the SABA news agency reported.

The U.S. plan "follows two parallel paths: One path aims at normalizing Arab-Israeli relations and the other will at best grant Palestinians administrative autonomy," 'Arafat said after arriving in Yemen.

He criticized the U.S. administration for having "entirely caved in to Israeli conditions" during recent negotiations aimed at organizing a Middle East peace conference in October.

"Israel is doing everything it can to make Jerusalem Jewish and establish more settlements for Jews coming from the Soviet Union, Ethiopia, eastern European countries and elsewhere," 'Arafat said.

Israel wants to exclude PLO representatives and those from east Jerusalem, which Israel has named as part of its "eternal" capital, from attending the peace conference.

Both Israeli and Palestinian officials have agreed to attend the conference, subject to the resolution of Palestinian representation and other issues.

Earlier the Palestinian news agency WAFA reported from Tunis that Arafat had said the "world is beginning to realize that it is Israel which is sabotaging peace efforts and threatening stability in the region."

The remarks, addressed to Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied Arab territories, came in a message marking the 45th month of their uprising.

"The unlimited support of the United States for the Hebrew state and their total alignment on the Israeli positions have only reinforced the arrogance of Israeli leaders and their commitment to the settlements policy," 'Arafat said.

The PLO leader is due to talk the Yemeni president, General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih. It is not know how long Arafat will stay in Yemen.

According to WAFA, 'Arafat called on Palestinians in the occupied territories to consolidate their uprising against Israeli occupation and overcome a "psychological and political" war against them.

He also called on them to defeat what he called a "financial blockade" against them.

"This war must in no case make Palestinians give up their sacred task, the consolidation of the uprising against Israel," he said, adding it was waged by "certain parties against the Palestinian people and the PLO."

'Arafat is to meet Yemeni president, General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih. The SABA news agency did not say how long Arafat would stay in Yemen, which like the PLO, was perceived as supporting Iraq during the Gulf war.

IAEA Inspection Team's Findings Reported

NC1008155091 Paris AFP in English 1532 GMT 10 Aug 91

[By Jacques Charmelot]

[Text] Baghdad, Aug 10 (AFP)—Iraq spent at least 10 billion dollars to develop a nuclear program aimed at building an atomic weapon, a source close to an international inspection mission said Saturday. "The Iraqis say that they spent one billion dollars, but what the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) missions saw in Iraq represents already 10 billion dollars," the source who requested anonymity disclosed.

Little was known previously about Iraq's nuclear weapons program because U.S. spy satellites were aimed at the Soviet Union and the Iraqis were so skillful at deception they even built fake weapons plants, the source said.

Iraq's first statements in April about its nuclear capacity represent less than one fifth of what is now known about it, he said. Based on current information, Iraq was about four years from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

The fourth IAEA mission left here Saturday after two weeks of inspections during which it visited 16 nuclear sites. In seven weeks of inspections, the four delegations visited a total of 25 nuclear sites.

"Most of the questions have been answered but not all," the head of the fourth IAEA mission to Iraq, David Kay, told AFP, adding that his team had had "no problem" in gaining access to Iraqi facilities.

Iraq's first statement about its nuclear capability on April 27 represented only 15 to 20 per cent of what the IAEA missions subsequently discovered, the source said.

"There is no indication permitting us to say that the process of providing evidence on Iraq's nuclear capability has been completed," the source said. More missions are expected.

He also revealed that U.S. spy satellites, which inform the special United Nations committee supervising the elimination of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, are unable to provide full information on Iraq's nuclear program.

"Washington has always concentrated its efforts on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe," he said. "And, while it deployed satellites above Iraq on August 1990, it was several years after the beginning of different Iraqi uranium enrichment programs," the source said.

The electromagnetic separation program involving calutrons started in 1984, the centrifugal program began a year later and the chemical separation operation started in 1989.

"What is more, satellites are not very effective when the terrain is rocky and their night vision is not excellent," he said.

The Iraqis are also masters in the art of deception, he said. "They even built fake nuclear facilities to deceive the Iranians during the war, which they reconverted into real factories after the cease-fire," he said.

Kay on Friday stressed the large role of Iraqi deception efforts. The source familiar with IAEA mission said there were still no clear figures on how much uranium Iraq possessed.

"If we take into consideration what has been brought to light until now, the Iraqis would have needed another four or five years to obtain a nuclear weapon," he said.

"If we accept the U.S. estimate of 44 kilograms (of enriched uranium), this delay would be cut to several months," he said.

Kay said he believed that the Iraqi nuclear program was not for peaceful ends, but added that no conclusion could be made about its scope before the end of the inspection phase and an analysis of the evidence gathered.

A fifth IAEA mission is expected to travel to Iraq within the next month.

Kay said Friday that Iraq has been trying to protect the countries that helped it develop its nuclear program. "We have asked the Iraqis to provide us a list of what equipment has been imported, where it comes from and what year," Kay said on Friday.

On Saturday, he told correspondents that the list supplied was "still insufficient." "There are gaps in it and we are not happy with it," he added.

Kay also maintained that Iraqis scientists and technicians were technically competent. "The scientific skill and management of this program is one that, if it were not dedicated to this particular purpose, would be certainly worthy of international acclaim," he said. "They have built superb facilities that would be welcomed any place in the world, certainly in Europe and North America," he added.

Team Praises Cooperation, Departs

JN1008192791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1917 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, 10 Aug (INA)—The fourth international nuclear inspection team left Baghdad today following a two-week visit to Iraq. During the visit, the team visited a number of nuclear, scientific, and industrial sites, as well as other sites, and met with Iraqi researchers, scientists, staff, and officials in these factories and sites. The head of the international team praised Iraq's cooperation. He said his team had been successful and made progress in its mission and would submit its report to the International Atomic Energy Agency in the next few days.

'Powerful Explosion' Reportedly Heard in South

LD1208084691 Tehran IRNA in English 0814 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Text] Khorramshahr (Khuzestan), Aug. 12, IRNA—A powerful explosion was heard in this southern port city from inside Iraq at 15:10 hours GMT Sunday.

The likely site of the blast is believed to be Abukhasib in al-Basra Province, and according to border authorities similar explosions were heard last Thursday from inside Iraq, reportedly from an ammunition depot in Abulkhasib.

The new wave of explosions after a period of silence in southern Iraq where the people rose up against the Saddam Husayn regime last March, has led to speculations that fresh fightings between the people and the Ba'athist forces are being intensified.

UN Delegate Explains Rejecting French Resolution

JN0908151391 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] Iraq has rejected the French draft resolution imposed on the Security Council because it is a very bad resolution compromising the country's sovereignty and militating against its ability to procure food. The statement was made by 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, Iraq's permanent UN representative, who was speaking to journalists following a meeting in New York last night with representatives of the seven nonaligned nations in the UN Security Council.

He explained that Iraq rejected the French resolution on political, techinical, and practical grounds. He pointed out that the resolution bars Iraq from pumping oil or developing its reserves and stipulates that Iraq obtain the prior approval of the Sanctions Committee for every deal. Al-Anbari wondered if an American firm decided to buy Iraqi oil, would the U.S. State Department seek the Sanctions Committee's approval. He noted that the issue would create technical complications since the Sanctions Committee deals with states directly rather than with firms or individuals. The French draft resolution, suggested al-Anbari, could be developed by extending the period from six months to one year and by leaving Iraq to choose such imports that would meet its humanitarian requirements. He noted that the draft resolution has failed to win the support of a number of the Security Council members, particularly the countries that are not well informed about the oil market. He explained the Iraqi position to a majority of the Security Council members, including those of the nonaligned nations and the permanent members.

Tariq 'Aziz Comments on Resolution

JN1008115491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1026 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, 10 Aug (INA)—Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz today received Peter Shansel, member of the European Parliament who is currently visiting Iraq.

During the meeting, the deputy prime minister reviewed the Iraqi people's sufferings as a result of the unjust economic blockade as well as the exposed U.S.-British-French attempts to maintain the blockade and starve the Iraqi people through proposing draft resolutions aimed at prolonging the blockade and circumventing the humanitarian calls for lifting it and alleviating the sufferings of the Iraqi people.

The deputy prime minister affirmed that Iraq rejects the current formula of the French draft resolution because it basically is not aimed to meet the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people but rather to plunder Iraqi wealth and use it to cover the costs of implementing Security Council resolutions. He added that this draft resolution is a flagrant violation of sovereignty rights. Moreover, he urged the world parties and quarters not connected to colonialist policies and objectives in the region to resist these policies and objectives.

Hostage Release Said Part of 'Bigger Deal'

JN1008180791 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1640 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Nawwaf Abu-al-Hayja' analysis; from the "Spotlight on the News" program]

[Text] Three days after the release of the British hostage John McCarthy, a hitherto unknown organization in Beirut has announced the abduction of a French doctor, Jerome Leyraud, saying it kidnapped him in order to stop the release of Western hostages until its demand for the release of Arab detainees and prisoners in other places, including the Zionist entity, is met.

A Syrian military official—who, according to AFP, has senior rank—today asserted that French hostage Leyraud will most probably be released today. AFP cites the Syrian official as saying: We are heading toward a solution as far as Leyraud's fate is concerned. No news about his fate has emerged thus far. The new development, however, in the episode of Western hostages is the announcement by a group calling itself the Revolutionary Justice Organization [RJO], which said it intends to release its two U.S. hostages, Joseph Cicippio and Edward Austin, who were abducted in Beirut in 1986.

Meanwhile, the organizations that claimed responsibility for the abduction of Westerners have said they have done so for a number of reasons, including securing the release of 400 Lebanese and Palestinian Arab detainees held by the Zionist entity. Even after all these years, no one has publicly responded to the demands of these organizations supported by the Damascus and Tehran regimes.

The RJO statement comes as a surprise in light of the threat made by the abductors of Dr. Leyraud to kill him if any other hostage was released. The statement issued by the RJO in Beirut today may shed light on what has happened behind the scenes in the past few days; namely, the secret talks in which the Damascus Government played the godfather's role with the support of the Tehran Government.

Oddly enough, the same organization, which is supposed to be terrorist in the eyes of international legitimacy, has—in a statement carried verbatim by AFP today—unmasked the important role of UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, the person who is supposed to represent international legitimacy, which, according to UN laws, regulations, and principles, is in turn supposed to fight terrorism. The organization has praised the efforts of the secretary general and his envoy, Piccot, whom the organization today asked to be present in Damascus to receive hostage Joseph Cicippio and possibly the other American, Austin. In addition to its praise for Perez de Cuellar, the organization also expresses concern about carrying out the wishes of the Tehran and Damascus regimes, although it concentrates more on the Damascus regime's role in the secret talks. The organization—we mean the one called Revolutionary Justice—also pointed to the existence of a deal. According to this deal, after the American hostage Cicippio is released, a promise to release those the organization calls the jailed brothers—specifically the man called 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd who was detained by Israel three years ago—will be fulfilled.

It is clear that the Western hostages have become an issue to serve as a prelude to striking deals, determining stands, and diverting attention, whenever there is a need to do so, from more dangerous steps that have to be taken. It seems this charade is continuing now and can be understood within the framework of the game of preparing to strike the bigger deal in October 1991, when the proposed regional conference for peace in the Middle East convenes.

Foreign Ministry Denounces ICO Resolution

JN1008111591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1030 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, 10 Aug (INA)—The Foreign Ministry has strongly denounced the so-called Gulf war resolution, which was passed through treachery and extortion in the 20th Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] foreign ministers meeting, held in Istanbul 3-8 August.

Commenting on the resolution, a responsible source at the Ministry said: Rather than demonstrating love, compassion, and integration among the members of the unified Islamic nation as advocated by our Islamic religion, and rather than displaying solidarity and cooperation to face the major challenges to the Islamic world, some ICO foreign ministers called for the continuation of the blockade and embargo against Iraq to deprive the sick of medicine and the children of milk after a year of a continuing unjust blockade.

The responsible source wondered: Has the resolution issued in the name of the Istanbul conference anything to do with the true values and humanitarian ideals of Islam?

Those who blindly signed the resolution, the source added, were only implementing an explicit U.S. decision to continue the blockade against Iraq and subject the Iraqis to severe humanitarian agony against which representatives of international and humanitarian organizations have strongly and eloquently warned, as pointed out in the report of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, the UN secretary general's executive representative.

The source said: Perpetuating hatred and opening wounds instead of redressing them and turning over the page of differences, and deepening divisions instead of working to achieve Islamic cohesiveness against the serious, fateful challenges the Muslims are facing at this sensitive stage serve the purposes of Zionism and its allies in Washington and the Western capitals when holy Jerusalem and the blessed al-Aqsa mosque are targeted by the conspiracy of Judaization, Zionization, and cancerous colonialist expansion, and when the Palestine question is facing the threat of complete liquidation.

The responsible source at the Foreign Ministry spoke about the remaining provisions of the American resolution which was issued in Istanbul. The source said that the resolution is full of lies, mistakes, and deception. On the UN Security Council resolutions, the source said that Iraq has affirmed and continues to affirm that it abides by the implementation of these resolutions in spite of its declared stand on them, that Iraq cooperates with the UN secretary general, his representatives, and with the inspection teams he sends to carry out its obligations that are stipulated in Resolution 687.

In its statement, the Foreign Ministry source spoke about the issue of Kuwaiti prisoners, affirming that Iraq had previously disclosed how the Kuwaiti authorities procrastinate in getting back their citizens under the pretext of scrutinizing their identities and that this has taken place with the knowledge of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Why do the foreign ministers of some Islamic countries not take the trouble to ascertain facts direct from a neutral international body before repeating the lies of the Kuwaiti rulers and their American masters? Have they forgotten God's saying: You who believe, if a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest you harm people unwittingly, and afterward become full of repentance for what you have done. [Koranic verse]

The Foreign Ministry responsible source greeted the Islamic countries delegations which had defended right and courageously confronted the American trend that prevails over the ICO and which enjoys the generosity of Saudi Arabia, the headquarters of the ICO. The source said: We would have liked those who are against the non-Islamic resolution to proclaim their stand with courage to prevent the peddling of injustice and harm against Arab and Muslim Baghdad, the capital of Al-Mansur, Al-Rashid, and Saddam Husayn.

Concluding the source said: We note with great interest the dissatisfaction and denunciation that have started to spread among the Islamic countries against the methods of blackmail and deception that are exercised by the governments of some Islamic countries which are loyal to the United States to peddle policies that do not serve the Muslim people.

Talabani Says Neighbors Frightened by Democracy

JN0908165891 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, has said that he discussed with His Majesty King Husayn the conditions in Iraq and in the region as well as the stages covered in the ongoing negotiations between the Iraqi Government and the Kurdish delegation, which represents the Kurdish Front in Iraq.

In an interview with the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY, he added that they also discussed the historic relations between the two fraternal peoples, the Kurds and the Arabs, in the interest of bolstering Iraqi national unity and protecting and bolstering Arab-Kurdish brotherhood to be able to face the heavy winds that hit it at times.

Talabani praised the democratic experience in Jordan and said he hopes it will improve until it realizes its potential. He said he informed the Iraqi Government that he agrees to apply the Jordanian experience in Iraq and to consider it an example to be followed.

Regarding the reasons preventing the signing of an agreement between the Iraqi Government and the Kurdish Front, Talabani said the two sides are doing a thorough and detailed study of the intractable problems, as well as other problems like the democracy question, which has become a vital need and through which all problems and questions can be resolved, including the Kurdish question in Iraq.

He pointed out that the Kurdish problem is a victim of foreign interference. He said: It is our duty to exert efforts to reach a lasting, permanent, and radical solution so that there will never be a problem in Iraq called the Kurdish problem and so that Iraq can devote its attention to resolving its economic, development, and political questions.

Regarding his position on countries neighboring Iraq and the achievement of a final agreement between the Kurds and the Iraqi Government, Talabani said: The majority of states in the region do not want the two parties to reach agreement. Therefore, the two parties must understand this reality and abort the foreign interference by establishing democracy. The presence of democracy, enjoyed by the Iraqi people, frightens some neighbors. Therefore, we must pay attention to resolving our problems and proceed from our domestic reality in Iraq.

Regarding the UN Security Council's insistence on maintaining the economic sanctions and blockade against Iraq, he said: The UN resolutions are unjust to Iraq and constitute an interference in its domestic affairs. He stressed the need to put an end to the sanctions and maintain Iraq's independence, sovereignty, and Arab-Kurdish national unity because Iraq's interest lies there.

He added that he discussed the need to end the blockade imposed on Iraq with a number of European officials.

Talabani on Turkish 'Interference,' Allies' Silence

JN0908183591 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, left Amman today for Turkey at the conclusion of a visit to Jordan, during which he met with His Majesty King Husayn. During the meeting, which was attended by His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, they exchanged views on the overall situation in the Arab region.

Prior to his departure, our reporter Salim 'Ali Dhiyab interviewed Mr. Talabani. Talabani asserted that talks between Iraqi Kurdish parties and the Iraqi Government are continuing to overcome obstacles to the agreement between the two sides.

[Begin recording] [Dhiyab] Mr. Jalal Talabani, we want to inquire about the talks between you, the Kurdish opposition, and the Iraqi Government. What stage have they reached?

[Talabani] As you know, negotiations between the Iraqi Kurdistan Front delegation and the Iraqi Government have been going on for several months. These negotiations have covered certain territory on the road to an agreement, but in addition to making some progress, there are still obstacles relating to democracy in Iraq. They also relate to ensuring a real autonomous rule for the Kurdish people as part of Iraqi national unity. The delegation is now in Baghdad, headed by brother Mas'ud Barzani. It is continuing to iron out differences between the Kurdish delegation and the Iraqi Government.

[Dhiyab] What does Mr. Talabani have to say about reports saying that Turkish forces have entered northern Iraq to hunt down Turkish Kurds?

[Talabani] In fact I am leaving for Turkey today. As Mr. (Kaya Toppery), spokesman for the Turkish Presidency, said, the dialogue I am going to conduct will include that issue. As you know, I previously said that this Turkish interference, about which, contrary to what has been said, we have not been consulted—in fact, others told us about it—was a hasty interference. I had hoped that Turkish officials would postpone this process until we arrived in Ankara to talk about border issues. I previously pointed out that this interference is contrary to international law. We hoped it would not happen.

[Dhiyab] But what does the silence of the United States and the allies mean?

[Talabani] In fact, this silence raises questions. The allies should have voiced their opinions about this, especially since part of this operation is taking place in an area where the allies had previously sent forces to guarantee the security of Kurdish refugees who fled from Iraqi Kurdish cities. So we hope that the Turkish Government and the allies are currently discussing this, diplomatically, as they say.

[Dhiyab] Thank you, sir.

[Talabani] Thank you. [end recording]

Turkish 'Campaign' Against Kurds Criticized

NC0908183891 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1650 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Unattributed commentary: "The Fierce Turkish Military Campaign Against Our People in Kurdistan Must Stop"]

[Text] The Turkish forces have been continuing their military campaign inside the territory of Iraqi Kurdistan for the fifth day. The declared objective of this campaign—in which military aircraft, airborne troops, and armored vehicles are used—was to deal heavy blows to the positions of the Kurdish opposition in Turkey.

Whatever the true aims of this fierce military campaign may be, it raises a number of important questions. These include, first: Our Kurdish people's struggle is passing through a sensitive stage and the Kurdish issue is enjoying comprehensive international support. Why did the Turkish Government choose this particular time to attack the territory of Iraqi Kurdistan and penetrate about 16 km—according to the Turkish press—to attack the bases of the parties opposed to it and with such massiveness and force? This raises more than one question regarding the undeclared objectives of the Turkish campaign.

Second: During the recent events in Iraqi Kurdistan, Turkey expressed its indignation, protest, and condemnation of the repressive campaigns and offenses against the Kurdish people in Iraq. It opened its borders before the Kurdish refugees and allowed international aid to reach the Kurdish refugees and homeless in the face of international pressure. During the recent months, the Turkish Government and the Kurdish opposition in Turkey have expressed their readiness for dialogue and negotiations to solve the Kurdish problem in Turkey peacefully. If this is the case—which is the correct and sound course to resolve the Kurdish problem—why did the military escalation take place in Turkey's Kurdistan at this particular time when all the parties were supposed to maintain a spirit of responsibility and [word indistinct].

Third: Although the Turkish authorities claimed in their communiques that they have ordered their forces and Air Force not to hit any civilian positions, other reliable reports confirm that there were many victims among the civilians and Iraqi Kurdish refugees and that fire was set to the crops of Kurdish peasants. This is in addition to the fact that the mere crossing of the border by the Turkish forces and their entry into Iraqi Kurdistan is regarded as a violation of international law and further aggravates and complicates the situation in the region.

Fourth: Reports have said that Turkey's neighboring states have reacted in different ways to the Turkish campaign. Reports spoke of Iraqi satisfaction over the campaign because it can, according to some sources, destroy the existing relations between the Turkish Government and the Kurdish organizations in Iraq. According to these sources, Iran and Syria have announced that the Turkish campaign against the Kurds will affect the relations between Ankara on the one hand and Tehran and Damascus on the other.

Irrespective of whether these reports are true, it is clear that the Kurdish problem exists and should be solved by just, peaceful means. As for the attempt to resolve this problem by violence and force or use it as a bargaining chip, events of the past years have proved that this is a losing card and will not last long, whatever methods and actions are used and irrespective of how violent and intensive these actions become.

The recent Turkish military campaign cannot be the way to achieve security, peace, and stability in Turkey, no matter how violent and fierce it may become. Experience in Turkey's Kurdistan and in the other parts of Kurdistan has proven it is possible to find a just solution to this problem only one way, which is peaceful dialogue and nothing else.

Memo Protests Turkish 'Infringement' of Territory

JN0908183291 Baghdad INA in English 1757 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, Aug. 9, INA—The INA learnt that the Foreign Ministry had on Thursday submitted a memo of protest to the Turkish Foreign Ministry on the Turkish Army infringement of Iraqi territories. The memo said that Turkish forces supported by planes moved 16 kms deep in Iraqi territories under the pretext of chasing Isolationist terrorists.

The memo considered the Turkish behaviour a violation to the U.N. Charter and international law in addition to harming the relations of cooperation and neighborhood between the Iraqi and Turkish peoples. The memo appealed to the Turkish Government not to repeat such violations and affirmed Iraq's desire to boost relations and respect with Turkey.

Kurdistan Front, Islamic Movement Issue Statement

JN0908192391 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1640 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] Dear listeners: On 22 July 1991, a meeting was held between representatives of the Kurdistan Front and the Islamic Movement in Iraqi Kurdistan to bolster and strengthen ties between the two sides. The meeting issued a joint statement, which says the two sides agreed on the following points:

1. To strengthen the spirit of brotherhood and cooperation between the Front and the Movement to ensure there will be no problem, regardless of its size, between the two sides.

2. The Islamic Movement supports the Kurdistan Front's leadership regarding the negotiations between the Kurdistan Front and the Iraqi Government to realize the Kurdish people's rights and interests. The Movement will support the Front's endeavors.

3. In all circumstances, and in the case of reaching or failing to reach agreement with the government, the Islamic Movement will coordinate with the Kurdistan Front on all levels—economic, financial, political, military, judicial, social, educational, and (?electoral) in a manner that takes into account the interest of the whole people.

4. The Movement is free to propagate its ideas without obstruction all over Kurdistan through newspapers, magazines, and any other means. The Kurdistan Front will lend facilitates to the Movement whenever necessary.

5. Under normal circumstances, the Kurdistan Front will extend full support to the Islamic Movement so as to play a big role in running the Awqaf Administration and starting religious teacher training schools.

6. The Movement is free to pursue relations with Islamic figures and Kurdish parties outside the homeland that seek the interests of the Kurdish people.

7. The Islamic Movement will not be prevented from collecting zakat and donations given voluntarily.

8. The Movement will be able to build mosques, schools, institutes, and religious universities according to popular will and the needs of the homeland, and law and Islamic shar'ia.

9. The Islamic Movement will not be coerced into implementing any action or law or constitution contrary to law and Islamic shar'ia.

10. In the event of any problem arising between the peshmergas of the Front and the Movement, these will be sorted out by coordinating officers from both sides.

11. The Islamic Movement in Kurdistan will support the general authority of the political leadership adopted 21 July pertaining to the prevention of the smuggling of machines, cars, and cereals out of Iraqi Kurdistan.

12. The Front and the Movement are pledged to the implementation of these points. Toward that end, the Movement's representative will cooperate and coordinate with the Kurdistan Front representative.

Memo to UN Details 'Enemy Overflights' 8-9 Aug

JN1008165591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1550 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] New York, 10 Aug (INA)—American aircraft have continued to violate Iraq's airspace, engaging in reconnaissance and provocation. In a memorandum submitted to the UN secretary general, Iraq's permanent envoy said U.S. aircraft staged 33 sorties in 13 formations of two aircraft each plus seven individual sorties over 8-9 August 1991. He added that the enemy overflights were mainly over the areas of Dahuk, Irbil, Mosul, Shaqlawah, and Rawandoz at an altitude of two to 20 km [figures as received] and a speed of 720 to 900 km per hour.

Hammadi Reiterates Interest in Improving Relations

JN1008190291 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Prime Minister Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi has stressed that Iraq categorically rejects any attempt to interfere in its domestic affairs, even under the cover of the UN Security Council. During a meeting with European Parliament member Peter Shansel, the prime minister reaffirmed Iraq's desire to improve its foreign relations and cooperate with anyone wishing to cooperate with it.

Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi said: Despite its acceptance of the UN Security Council resolutions, Iraq still suffers the destructive consequences of the unjust economic blockade imposed against it by the United States and its allies, which try to pursue the old colonialist methods to unjustly impose hegemony on peoples using the pretext of achieving progress for them.

The prime minister stressed that Iraq wanted to strengthen ties of friendship and cooperation with the people of Europe to serve their mutual interest. He shed light on the magnitude of the damage inflicted on Iraq by the 30-state aggression and the rioting carried out by the criminals who came from across the border and by the mobs.

Syrian Ba'ths Condemn al-Asad's Arab Policy

JN1108174991 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] The Arab Socialist Ba'th Party in Syria has affirmed that the U.S.-Atlantic-Zionist aggression against Iraq was the first link in a big conspiracy aimed at first destroying the pan-Arab aspirations, and then perpetuating the fragmented Arab situation and the state of national collapse. In a statement issued today, the

Ba'th Party noted that the aggression consists of chapters and all the parties participating in it have their premeditated roles. Hafiz al-Asad and his regime have a role not only in the new U.S. alliance, under the guise of security arrangements in the Gulf, but also in liquidating the pan-Arab cause in Palestine.

The statement notes that out of its disregard for the UN resolutions and the blood of the intifadah martyrs, the Hafiz al- Asad regime bypassed the national and pan-Arab rights and placed its hand in the Zionist hand. Thus, this regime has affirmed its disregard for the occupied Arab territory in the Golan, and agreed on all the Zionist conditions regarding the enemy's agreement on direct negotiations while the enemy was affirming that it will not relinquish the Golan.

The statement says that Hafiz al-Asad had hoped that his U.S. and Zionist masters would give him the Golan as a reward. However, Hafiz' only reward in the whole deal was a U.S.-Zionist agreement on sharing influence in Lebanon with them, and a secondary role in a U.S.-Gulf force within the alliance's plans regarding the Arabian Gulf.

The statement calls on all the good, honorable, and struggling Arabs to embark on an organized and planned move to expose the conspiracy, confront its symbols inside the Arab homeland, and to contain and abort this conspiracy.

U.S., Allies 'Intend To Inflict More Damage'

JN1108132291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1158 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, 11 Aug (INA)—National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih has declared that America and its allies intend to inflict more damage on Iraq and its people by continuing the unjust economic blockade despite Iraq's agreement on the UN Security Council resolutions. During his meeting with European Parliament member Peter Shansel, Sa'di Mahdi Salih called for an end to the economic blockade imposed on the Iraqi people. He added that the continuation of the blockade is a blatant violation of all humane and international laws, charters, and norms, because it is linked with colonialist and political objectives sought by America and its allies on exposed pretexts.

The member of the European Paliament stated that the international community wanted to stop the economic blockade imposed on the Iraqi people, particularly in terms of medicine and food, adding that its continuation is not justified. The meeting was attended by the deputy speaker of the National Assembly and several Assembly members.

Saddam Reportedly Orders Aides To Buy Gold

NC1108152191 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1420 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] In an precautionary move to ensure his future well-being, Saddam Husayn has ordered his aides to collect the largest possible amount of gold from shops in Baghdad and other Iraqi cities. Informed sources have reported that Husayn Kamil, Saddam's son-in-law and his minister of defense, is personally undertaking the purchase of large amounts of gold from jewelry shops in Baghdad. Saddam's son 'Udayy is doing the same thing in Mosul.

The sources add that these two criminals are buying huge amounts of gold and jewelry with the new worthless and poor-quality banknotes the fraudulent regime is printing despite the inadequacy of its gold reserves.

In another development, Turkish security authorities apprehended a henchman of the Ba'thist regime as he was trying to smuggle suitcases filled with gold, jewelry, and precious stones across the border. During interrogation, the smuggler confessed to having ties to Ghadban al-Tikriti, criminal Saddam's half brother on his mother's side and former chief of Iraqi intelligence.

Saddam has already smuggled large amounts of gold outside Iraq to use in the event he flees the country.

Shamir—U.S. Must Preserve Impartiality

TA0908184591 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1705 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] By bridging the differences between Israel and the Arab countries, the United States will play an important role in the direct peace negotiations between us and our neighbors. This observation was made today by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir. Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik reports that in a meeting with a delegation of U.S. congressmen, Shamir said that the parties to the conflict have to be convinced that the United States will not take a stand in any side's favor. The meticulous observation of this attitude is a condition for the success of direct talks.

The prime minister also said that the parties must sit together until the conflict is resolved. If the principle of direct negotiations is adhered to, there is no doubt that we will eventually reach a solution, even if crises and delays emerge as we go along, said Shamir.

Shamir on Prisoner Release, Political Process

TA1108192191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has said that Israel wants to receive signs that our seven POW's and MIA's in Lebanon are alive. Then, Mr. Shamir said, we would be prepared to discuss a reciprocal release. Mr. Shamir added: We have been living with this serious and tragic problem of our seven POW's and MIA's for many years, and nobody can ask us to take any step if we do not get them back. Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that the prime minister made these remarks to U.S. congressmen who called on him at his office.

Referring to the political process, the prime minister said that there are still differences with regard to the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. The Jordanians are interested in negotiations, but there are many difficulties concerning the Palestinians.

Briefs Congressmen on Loan, Talks

TA1108172991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said that the United States knows that there is no risk involved in giving Israel $10 billion in loan guarantees because Israel has the reputation of always paying its debts. He made this statement to a group of U.S. congressman currently visiting Jerusalem.

Commenting on the peace negotiations, Shamir said that we will examine the readiness of the Arab states to negotiate with us seriously. We still do not know the results of the negotiations, but we do know that the process will be neither easy nor short.

Reportage on Hostage-Related Developments

Uri Lubrani Departs

TA1208050991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Excerpt] Uri Lubrani, coordinator of government activities in Lebanon, has left for a two-day trip overseas, probably in order to meet with the UN secretary general. Our military affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe is here with the few details we have:

The defense establishment refused to issue any details yesterday about Uri Lubrani's hasty departure overseas. Lubrani, who heads the Israeli team in charge of the hostage affair, probably went abroad for two days in order to meet with the UN secretary general in Geneva, in the wake of the letter received by the latter from the Islamic Jihad through John McCarthy, the released British hostage.

In the meantime, Israel has no intention of giving in to the pressure to release the Shiite detainees it is holding in Lebanon. Israeli officials say that without receiving prior information regarding the state of the Israeli POW's and MIA's, no gesture will be possible. [passage omitted]

Meets Perez de Cuellar

TA1208104091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Report by David Ze'ev]

[Excerpt] UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar says the letter he received yesterday from the captors of released hostage John McCarthy gave him the authority to negotiate on the kidnappers' behalf to secure the release of Western hostages.

Perez de Cuellar met last night in Geneva with Uri Lubrani, Israel's coordinator of activities in Lebanon and the man who most recently masterminded the airlift of Ethiopian Jews to Israel in Operation Solomon. Lubrani has reported back to Israeli officials on his talks. They dealt with the issue of a swap of prisoners held by Israel for the captives in the hands of the Hizballah. Lubrani is due back in Israel tonight. [passage omitted]

Jihad Letter—No New Information

TA1208092191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Text] A report reaching Jerusalem states that the letter delivered to the UN secretary general by released British hostage John McCarthy contains no new information on the Israeli POW's and MIA's, nor does the letter received from the kidnappers, members of the Islamic Jihad Organization, supply any proof or signs of life from the Israeli prisoners. Sources in the defense establishment said that the letter was disappointing in this respect.

Lubrani on Exchange Eligibility

TA0908183291 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1705 GMT 09 Aug

[Interview with Uri Lubrani, Defense Ministry coordinator of activities for the release of prisoners and coordinator of government activities in Lebanon, in the Tel Aviv studio by military affairs correspondent Moshe Shlonsky in the Jerusalem studio—live]

[Excerpt] Good evening, Mr. Lubrani.

[Lubrani] Good evening.

[Shlonsky] Is it true what the BBC has reported regarding your appeal on behalf of Israel to the SLA [South Lebanese Army] to make a goodwill gesture by releasing some Shiites in order possibly to promote the negotiations?

[Lubrani] What is true is that we appealed to General Lahd about 10 months ago to make a unilateral gesture by releasing 40 Shiite prisoners from al-Khiyam Prison. At the time, the general granted our request and released the prisoners. We thought then that the move could have been beneficial in promoting the release of POW's and hostages. We received neither thanks nor any other acknowledgement. We have not approached Gen. Lahd since, and we do not intend to do so as long as we are not convinced that our soldiers are among the prisoners released.

[Shlonsky] Our Washington-based correspondent reports that the Americans, too, would expect the release of Shiites, and perhaps political prisoners. Who does Israel intend to release if negotiations and a prisoner exchange take place?

[Lubrani] We intend to release all the detainees who can possibly be released from here, as well as those held by Gen. Lahd, on the express condition that we are included in the deal.

[Shlonsky] Are you referring to Palestinians or to Lebanese detainees? To whom is Israel referring?

[Lubrani] We are referring to detainees captured in Lebanon. Every detainee who was taken in Lebanon is held either in al-Khiyam Prison or in Israeli prisons.

[Shlonsky] Including Palestinians captured in Lebanon?

[Lubrani] I think so, yes.

[Shlonsky] Have you received either information about the letter addressed to Perez de Cuellar, or the letter itself, which is reported to make several demands of Israel, too?

[Lubrani] It never reached us. To the best of my knowledge, it has not reached the UN secretary general either. As the media reported, he is due to arrive in London tomorrow, and he may meet with McCarthy to get the letter. That is what we have been told. [passage omitted]

UK Hostage Request 'Chutzpah'

TA0908181691 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1705 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Report by military affairs correspondent Moshe Shlonsky]

[Text] British chutzpah and hypocrisy—that is how Israeli sources have termed today's request by Britain to release detainees in exchange for the release of Western hostages.

The Israeli ambassador to Britain was today summoned to the Foreign Office, where he was apprised of the request.

Israel has received no new information in the past 24 hours. In any event, a door—perhaps only a crack—appears to have opened toward the release of prisoners, including Israelis. Hizballah would like to get rid of the merchandise in its possession, but is still demanding a high price.

Arens on Hostages, Peace Process

TA0908132391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Telephone interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by Shalom Qital—live]

[Excerpts] [Qital] Good day, Minister Arens.

[Arens] Good day.

[Qital] Does the release of a hostage held in Lebanon herald the same for our hostages?

[Arens] We hope it does. We hope this is merely the beginning of a process in which, eventually, every hostage will be released. We cannot be certain, however. I understand that, in the meantime, a Frenchman has been abducted by another group, which is trying to torpedo the process. We are dealing here with very radical people whose actions are highly unpredictable.

[Qital] Do you think the assassination of Shahpur Bakhtiar is also part of the same insane actions?

[Arens] Well, this is the same community, the same population. Unfortunately, this kind of action characterizes them.

[Qital] I know that not much can be said publicly on what I am about to ask, because it is an extremely sensitive issue. Still, what can you say about our hostages?

[Arens] Our firm stand is that all our actions are aimed at bringing back our POW's and MIA's. We will do everything possible to achieve that goal. Having said that, I wish to state that the less is said, the better. We have learned from experience that any achievements in this field result from very clandestine contacts, rather than from media announcements.

[Qital] Can we at least be told whether Israel knows who is still alive?

[Arens] We do not know. We do not know, and we act on the assumption that they are all alive. We have demanded that their captors bring forth evidence of life, and from our point of view, that is the first step before any progress can be made. [passage omitted]

[Qital] Here is an issue on which conversation can be forthright: the Pollard case. Some people are saying that this may be an opportunity to make an elaborate deal that would include the release of Jonathan Pollard. Is there such a possibility?

[Arens] I see no connection, and I am afraid that any attempt to link those two affairs is liable to do more damage than good.

[Qital] Let us speak about another issue, on which more can be said: the political contacts. A U.S. team has arrived here. It consists of the secretary of state's aides; it is not on a ministerial level. Has it made any progress on the formulation of the memorandum of understanding?

[Arens] I understand that the delegation is at work. The goal is to put in writing all the agreements that have already been reached. I foresee no problems; I hope everything will be agreed on. [passage omitted]

[Qital] Do you share the assessment that the chief of staff voiced this week, that Syria remains the greatest peril, despite everything that has been said and despite Baker's progress in Syria?

[Arens] When we make these assessments, we always differentiate between capability and intention. The capability is more or less known. In the case of Iraq, even that knowledge was imperfect. I think we have the ability to assess and analyze Syria's military capability, which is very great. The Syrian Army is not significantly smaller than the Iraqi Army before it was defeated. At that time, President Bush described the Iraqi Army as the fourth biggest army in the world. The Syrians already have missiles, and they are continuing to build up their potential. In addition, they have chemical warfare potential. The Syrians have a high capability, and, in certain conditions, they can pose a serious threat to us.

The other aspect is the intentions. I would like to hope that when Syrian ruler al-Asad speaks of his willingness to conduct direct peace negotiations with us, he does not intend to use his capability against us.

[Qital] We have returned to the central question debated by the public: What are we proposing to discuss with al-Asad? Is the formula of peace for peace feasible at all, or is there no choice but to withdraw from the Golan Heights?

[Arens] I must admit I am always surprised to hear Israelis proposing that relations between countries have only one dimension, the territorial dimension, and that there is nothing else to discuss. I am likewise surprised when I hear people here say that we should agree to the principle that other countries can attack us as often as they like, losing land in the process, and rest assured that we will eventually give that land back. There is no better invitation to violence and more wars in the region than this idea, to which we do not subscribe. We hope they will show understanding and a desire to discuss additional dimensions, in addition to the territorial one. If the sole issue up for discussion between us and Syria is territory, I believe it will be difficult to make much progress. [passage omitted]

No 'Positive Developments'

TA1208055591 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Telephone interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by Gay Zohar and Ya'el Dan—live]

[Text] [Zohar] Good morning, Defense Minister Arens.

[Arens] Good morning.

[Zohar] Can we really report any positive developments this morning?

[Arens] No, I am sorry to say that I cannot report any positive developments at this moment. There are seven Israeli soldiers who have either been held prisoner or been missing in action for between five and nine years, and Israel has received no signs of life whatsoever from them for a long time. Until we receive real information on their condition, one cannot speak of any developments.

[Dan] Is Israel conducting any sort of negotiations on a prisoner exchange at this time?

[Arens] At this stage we are conducting no negotiations whatsoever. I appeared yesterday on American television, with the Iranian ambassador to the United Nations speaking just before me. I had the opportunity to hear him, and he stated that Iran would not be willing to hold any contacts at all with Israel on this issue.

[Zohar] Can you confirm the reports that Uri Lubrani was summoned to a meeting with the UN secretary general?

[Arens] I cannot confirm that report. I heard it on the radio this morning.

[Dan] Mr. Arens, do we have any information on the contents of the letter delivered to UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar?

[Arens] No. We have not been advised of the contents of the letter, at least not yet.

[Dan] Are there some things we expect to find in the letter, such as information on navigator Ron Arad, for example?

[Arens] We are hoping and I would say even praying for that. At this stage, however, because I have not received the contents of the letter, I cannot tell you anything.

[Zohar] But we expect the UN secretary general to update us after he digests the contents of the letter, which I believe he already saw yesterday.

[Arens] I imagine that will be the case. That is definitely his job, and I am sure that if the letter contains information relevant to Israel, he will pass it on.

[Dan] Mr. Arens, three Western hostages have already been released. Does each such release bring us any closer to our goal, or is there no connection?

[Arens] I hope so. If I had to choose between the current situation in which several hostages were released or the long years in which there were no releases at all, then I would opt for the former. I am glad that hostages were released. Second, I also hope that it is a sign of some dynamics, of some kind of process that will not stop now.

[Zohar] Is Israel presenting any precondition before entering negotiations?

[Arens] We have no preconditions. We are determined to get our boys home, and as a first necessary step we are demanding that we receive some signs of life and proof of their condition today.

[Dan] Will Israel give anything in return, even only for this information you are talking about?

[Arens] You will certainly understand that such a sensitive issue is not a subject for negotiations in the media.

[Zohar] The problem is that the Western countries, at least, are publicly appealing to Israel to make some gesture in return for the release of the three Western hostages.

[Arens] I am sorry about that, because I believe that if any one of those countries were in our situation and had hostages over there from whom no signs of life whatsoever have been received, they would not volunteer to abandon their own soldiers while trying to help the kidnapped citizens of other countries. Nobody can expect us to abandon our soldiers.

[Dan] Cannot President Bush's statement that he expects every country holding hostages to release them be seen perhaps as indirect pressure on Israel?

[Arens] I am convinced that President Bush does not place Israel in the same category as Hizballah or as Syria or Iran—elements which have kidnapped people off the streets or held people without informing their families who is holding them or whether they are dead or alive. Israel is at war against the very elements that carried out these kidnappings. I think everyone understands that if the Western world holds any cards that can help it bring about the release of the hostages, then most of those cards are in Israel, which is holding quite a large number of Hizballah terrorists. It is quite possible that the hostage releases of recent days took place because Israel is holding many Hizballah terrorists.

[Zohar] British Prime Minister John Major has also lodged an appeal with the Israeli Government to release Shiite prisoners. Have we already given the British an answer?

[Arens] As far as I know, this letter was addressed to the prime minister; therefore, you should address your question to the Prime Minister's Office.

[Dan] Mr. Arens, are we any closer today to seeing our POW's and MIA's back home?

[Arens] I can only tell you that I hope that is the case. As I said, there has been some movement, and we hope that the momentum will not stop now.

[Zohar] The Syrians have received a lot of favorable publicity and kudos in this affair from Western countries—the United States, Britain, and France—following the release of a hostage after only three days. Is there really any change in Syrian policy on this issue?

[Arens] Look, I would say that there has definitely been a change. We always knew that the parties who could bring about the release of the hostages—whether hostages from Western countries or Israelis—were the Syrians and the Iranians. Hizballah is a gang that is financed by the Iranians and receives its orders from Tehran. This gang operates on Lebanese territory, which is under Syrian control. This was demonstrated recently when the Syrians wanted someone released. The Frenchman who was kidnapped only two days ago was released within 24 hours. Therefore, they certainly deserve compliments in this respect; however, we can only ask why they made no efforts to release the hostages in the past and why they are not now making sure that all the hostages, including the Israelis, are released at once.

[Zohar] In other words, Israel still considers Syria responsible for the Israeli MIA's and hostages?

[Arens] I do not think this is a question of the Israeli perspective. Hizballah operates on Lebanese territory, which is under Syrian control, in al-Biqa'. To the best of our knowledge, the hostages are also being held in this area. We know that nothing is done in areas under Syrian control without Syria's consent.

[Zohar] Thank you, Defense Minister Arens.

'Proof' on POW's Demanded

TA1108112391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Israel welcomes the release of yet another hostage. Dani Nave, the defense minister's adviser, said that Israel again calls on all the countries, primarily Syria and Iran, and all the organizations holding our POW's and MIA's to allow access to them and to provide solid proof that they are alive. This will allow negotiations toward the release of all the hostages, including our POW's and

MIA's. Nave noted that in the framework of these negotiations Israel will be willing to make its contribution and free the Lebanese detainees it is holding. This was reported by our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe.

Withdrawal-Hostage Link Rejected

TA1108150891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Telephone interview with Dani Nave, defense minister adviser, by Mikha Friedman and Uri Paz—live]

[Excerpts] [Friedman] Do we know what was in the letter from the Islamic Jihad that was delivered to the UN secretary general by released British hostage John McCarthy?

[Nave] Not yet. We are still waiting to hear its contents. I suppose that once we do, perhaps within the next few hours, we will know whether there has been any progress concerning the Israeli POW's and MIA's. Unfortunately, at this point I cannot give you any new information. [passage omitted]

[Paz] Is there anything to discuss about some kind of Israeli withdrawal from the security zone as part of a prisoner swap?

[Nave] There is no connection whatsoever between this painful humanitarian issue—the exploitation of human life and deprivation of freedom—and Israel's presence in south Lebanon. We have reiterated on numerous occasions that our presence there stems from our security needs and from our obligation to safeguard the security of northern Israel. There may be one connection, however, and that is that one of the organizations, Hizballah, is responsible for at least two Israeli POW's, Yosef Fink and Rahamim Alshekh. This is one of the main reasons for our presence in south Lebanon. We are obliged to maintain our presence in the region and back up General Lahd to safeguard our security because of Hizballah's continued terror activities. So, if there is any connection, it lies with Hizballah. [passage omitted]

Sources 'Suspicious' of al-Tibi Report

TA1108044791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, who has been linked with contacts with Palestinian elements in the past, has said that navigator Ron Arad is alive and in good health. According to him, members of Nayif Hawatimah's Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine are holding the body of soldier Samir As'ad. Dr. al-Tibi made these remarks in a conversation with our correspondent Karmela Menashe after returning to Israel from a visit in Geneva. According to al-Tibi, Palestinian elements are willing to help in the affair, and they have information.

In reaction, security sources said the report has not reached them yet and stressed that they tend to be suspicious of what al-Tibi says. At the same time, they made clear that they will examine the issue when they obtain the information.

Al-Tibi—Israel Rejected PLO Deal

TA1108063191 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 11 Aug 91 p 3

[Report by Ron Ben-Yishay]

[Excerpt] The PLO command in Tunis offers to transfer to Israel the body of IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldier Samir As'ad in return for the release of a "certain quota" of Palestinian detainees. A proposal to this effect was relayed to the Israeli Government via a mediator over the last few days, but the government rejected it.

This is claimed by Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, the Palestinian physician who returned from Geneva last weekend. According to al-Tibi, the body of the Druze soldier from the Galilee village Bet Jann is "under the responsibility of the PLO command in Tunis, and if Israel wants to receive it it should show flexibility."

Dr. al-Tibi further argues that the PLO command in Tunis has appointed him "responsible for the hostage file" and for negotiations on this issue, and that by virtue of this appointment he knows "with certainty" that Ron Arad, the Israeli navigator, is alive and in good health.

A senior Israeli element did not attribute much importance to the role Dr. al-Tibi plays in the hostage affair, contending that Dr. al-Tibi and the PLO are now trying to earn prestige from this miserable Lebanese quagmire.

In a talk with newsmen over the weekend, Dr. al-Tibi refused to state categorically whether he visited the PLO command in Tunis and with whom he met. Still, according to al-Tibi, the PLO leadership is involved in the hostage affair and is exerting pressure to lead to its rapid conclusion. Through Lebanese clergymen and Palestinians, the PLO is pressing Hizballah leaders not to give up their demand that Israel release intifadah detainees in an overall deal for the exchange of hostages and POW's. Also, according to al-Tibi, the PLO is very concerned about the fact that Hizballah is no longer raising this demand, even settling recently for only demanding the release of Palestinians caught in Lebanon. [passage omitted]

SLA's Lahd on Exchange

TA1108152691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] General Antoine Lahd, commander of the SLA [South Lebanese Army], said that he would be willing to release Lebanese detainees only on condition that IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and SLA prisoners were also released. He asserted that it is known for a fact that three SLA soldiers who have been taken prisoner are still alive. He expressed pleasure over the release of hostages in Lebanon but said that this does not mean that anything is being done about the IDF and SLA prisoners.

General Lahd revealed that about a month ago he had been contacted by Hizballah and had expressed his readiness in principle to carry out a prisoner exchange. However, there have been no further contacts since then.

Our military affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the SLA commander spoke while touring a summer camp for south Lebanese children in Ashqelon.

Developments in Peace Process Reported

Early Memorandum Signing Doubtful

TA1108094391 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 11 Aug 91 p A3

[Report by Gid'on Alon, 'Oded Zaray, and the correspondent in the territories]

[Excerpts] In view of serious disagreements between the Israeli and the U.S. teams on the composition of the Palestinian delegation to the peace conference, there is doubt whether the memorandum of understanding between Israel and the United States will be crystallized in the coming days.

Last night's meeting between the parties yielded no real progress on the issues in dispute. The Israeli team, headed by Yosi Ben-Aharon, director general of the Prime Minister's Office; Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein; Eytan Bentzur, a Foreign Ministry deputy director general; and Salay Meridor, an adviser to the defense minister, last night again presented the Israeli draft of the memorandum.

The draft states that negotiations with the Palestinians would follow the two-track approach (a three-year interim arrangement to be followed by negotiations on the permanent arrangements) and that the process will not bring about the establishment of a Palestinian state. The Americans, however, do not accept this draft.

The U.S. team (Aaron Miller, Dan Kurtzer, and Edmund Hall) was not even willing to accept the clause in the Israeli draft according to which Israel is not required to agree to the formula of "territories for peace," nor was it willing to accept the notion that the different interpretations of UN Resolution 242 by each of the parties will be discussed during the bilateral negotiations between Israel and Syria.

At the same time, progress was made in the phrasing of the clauses of the memorandum which are not considered problematic, such as the setting up of joint Israeli-Arab working teams to deal with the promotion of projects for regional development and an agreement that the UN secretary general [as published], who will attend the opening ceremony of the peace conference, will not have a right of speech. The location of the ceremony has not yet been finalized, though it seems that the most realistic option is Washington.

Political sources stressed last night that the U.S. team has no authority to conclude the phrasing of the memorandum of understanding and that any agreement attained will be subject to the approval of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. Without the prime minister's approval, the Israeli team also does not have authorization to deviate from the draft framed by Rubinstein and Bentzur.

The teams will probably continue their meetings until the middle of next week when the U.S. team will return to the United States for consultations. The U.S. team will hold additional meetings with Palestinian notables from the territories as well.

Faysal al-Husayni and Dr. Hannan 'Ashrawi last weekend returned from a visit in Europe on the issue of the peace process. Last Friday they held their first working session with the U.S. team that arrived here to draft the U.S.-Palestinian memorandum of understanding. [passage omitted]

The Palestinians have already changed the terminology they have been using so far from "memorandum of understanding" to the "memorandum of assurances" they are demanding of the U.S. Administration.

At the end of their meeting, facing reporters for the first time since they have returned from Europe, the Palestinian representatives were quick to refute rumors alleging that they visited Tunisia. Dr. 'Ashrawi asserted that "we were only in Paris and London." [passage omitted]

Talks Could Begin Without Palestinians

TA1208054591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Report by political correspondent Yo'el Nir]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] With regard to the political process, political sources in Jerusalem are saying that as far as the agenda goes, invitations to the opening of the peace conference are expected to be sent at the end of next month. U.S. Secretary of State James Baker is due in the region before that in order to summarize the matter of the Palestinian representation and the letters of assurances.

There are as yet no signs that the Palestinians have managed to overcome their hesitations or, in the words of a senior Jerusalem official, to overcome themselves. In other words, there has been no progress on the question of the Palestinian representation, even though the Americans, to quote that same official, are not totally discouraged and still entertain some hope. [Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 0400 GMT on 12 August adds that "political sources in Jerusalem say the American team is still showing patience, despite the difficulties."]

The U.S. team is due to return from Jordan today, and then we shall be able to learn if any progress has been made. Some sources in Jerusalem, however, expressed the belief that the conference will be convened without the Palestinians, who will be represented by an empty table, just like at the Geneva conference.

At any rate, Jerusalem sources rejected the linkage made yesterday by President Bush between the hostage issue and the political process.

Palestinians See Progress in Talks

TA0908180891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1700 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] Two leading Palestinians from the territories have held seven hours of talks with four U.S. State Department officials visiting Israel at the Ramallah home of Dr. Hannan 'Ashrawi. Joinging 'Ashrawi at the talks was Faysal al-Husayni. Following the talks al-Husayni and Dr. 'Ashrawi said progress had been made on the issue of the Palestinian delegation to peace talks and freezing Jewish settlement activity in the territories. Further talks between the Palestinians and the Americans are expected next week.

Demands Contradict U.S.-Israel Memo

TA1008193691 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1815 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Faysal al-Husayni has demanded that Palestinian legal experts from outside the territories be present at discussions with U.S. officials on the American-Palestinian memorandum of understanding. In addition, he wants the discussions to be held outside Israel. Our Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari notes that the purpose of the request to include Palestinian legal experts from abroad is to allow the PLO to take charge of the negotiations on formulating the memorandum.

Our correspondent adds that the Palestinians have presented a list of demands, most of which contradict clauses expected to be included in the U.S.-Israeli memorandum of understanding. The items on the list include demands that the Palestinian delegation be composed without outside intervention; that the question of Jerusalem be discussed during every stage; that there be clear linkage between all stages of the peace process; and that settlement activity be stopped at once.

More on Palestinian Demands

TA1108093291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Excerpts] It seems that the intifadah has not died, neither in Jerusalem nor in the territories. Two residents of Samaria were killed by soldiers' gunfire, and a soldier in Bethlehem was attacked. Our correspondent in the territories Moti Amir reports:

[Begin Amir recording] Faysal al-Husayni and Dr. Hannan 'Ashrawi on Friday ended an extensive discussion with U.S. officials in which they raised all their demands concerning PLO agreement to the convening of the regional conference. Dr. 'Ashrawi said that, judging from remarks the U.S. team had made, it appears that Israel does not have new signed assurances and that some Palestinian demands contradict demands Israeli representatives raised in their meetings. The Palestinian representatives told the Americans that they would like future talks to include experts from outside Israel and that they would prefer that future meetings be held in the United States. At the same time, four Palestinian notables have left for Jordan to hold discussions on the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

[Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 11 August carries on page A1 a report by Avino'am Bar-Yosef which says that the four Palestinians who left for Jordan are candidates for the delegatior, adding that they are "Attorney Ziyad Abu-Zayyad from al-'Azariyah, who has another address in Jerusalem; businessman Mustafa al-Natshah from Hebron, both supporters of Faysal al-Husayni; attorney Ghassan al- Shak'ah from Nabulus; and businessman Jamil al-Tarifi." The report adds that the last two are "affiliated with Radwan Abu-'Ayyash, who is considered the main political rival of al-Husayni."]

Over the weekend five Gaza Strip organizations published a communique calling on residents of the territories to show national unity and stop criticism and condemnation of the members of the delegation talking to the Americans. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Also on this issue, Yasir 'Arafat has called on Palestinians in the territories to foil the plot of some elements to suffocate the intifadah. Our Arab affairs correspondent Arye Gus has more details:

[Begin Gus recording] [passage omitted] It is the assessment of Palestinian sources who monitor the peace process discussions and declarations that the letter of U.S. assurances will not be concluded before the beginning of the conference in October. The PLO has raised more demands in its recent contacts with the Americans. Some were raised in the discussions al-Husayni and 'Ashrawi held with the U.S. representatives in Ramallah; others were raised by 'Arafat in a series of interviews he gave over the weekend. [passage omitted]

The PLO is currently setting up a team of legal experts and advisers to assist in the preparations for the peace conference. The PLO wants the contacts with the various elements to be held abroad, to allow the advisers to attend the talks. Another demand the PLO has raised is that the legal authority the sides would appeal to if the conference reaches a dead end be clearly defined.

At the same time, 'Arafat directly directly addressed the residents of the territories, calling on them to foil the economic, political, and psychological siege imposed on them by several elements, meaning the United States and Israel. The PLO struggle is currently aimed at foiling the possibility that the conference could convene without it. The political efforts of the organization and its leader, as well as the rise in demonstrations and disturbances, mainly in Jerusalem, should be viewed in this context. The PLO wants to stress that East Jerusalem is part of the territories. [end recording]

Thank you, Arye Gus. The U.S. team's contacts on the formulation of the memorandum of understanding continue. The U.S. and Israeli teams held talks last night. Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports:

[Begin Nir recording] Even after the meeting last night, the picture has not changed much. The problem and the ball are still in the hands of the Palestinians who still insist that a resident of East Jerusalem be part of the delegation and that Jerusalem be on the agenda, one way or another. According to them, this is the only point that would be agreed to by all the Arab countries. A new problem, however, has appeared: The Palestinians demanded that a Palestinian attorney in exile, who was party to drafting the Namibia agreement, take part in the discussions. Will Israel view this as the incorporation of the Palestinian diaspora in the talks?

In any event, according to reports, the U.S. team is leaving for Amman to discuss a letter of assurances for Jordan. According to these reports, the United States is even urging Israel to contact Jordan and reach an agreement on the composition of the Jordanian- Palestinian delegation. [passage omitted]

As for the contacts with Israel, last night it again became apparent that the difficulty still focuses on the clause stating that Israel is not requested to agree to territories for peace and on the problem of the Palestinian representation, now and in the second stage of the talks. It seems, however, that we will have to wait until international political activity is renewed in September. Then, it will become apparent if and when the Soviet Union will renew diplomatic relations with Israel. [end recording]

Gazans Denounce Jihad Threats

TA0808190391 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1630 GMT 8 Aug 91

[Text] Gaza Strip residents today denounced the campaign of threats by elements of the Islamic Jihad Organization against the three Palestinian personalities who met with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that masked men yesterday erased slogans written against those personalities in Khan Yunus and proclaimed their disapproval in counter-slogans. Several delegations representing all Gaza Strip sectors and institutions today went to the home of Dr. Zakariyya al-Agha to express their solidarity with him.

Shamir Aide on Peace Talks With U.S.

TA0908121591 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LESHABAT Supplement) in Hebrew 9 Aug 91 pp 2, 3, 18

[Interview with Yosi Ben-Aharon, director general of the Prime Minister's Office, by Dan Shilon; date and place not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Shilon] Although you like to present yourself as a mere civil servant [last two words in English], the television series "Yes, Prime Minister" would seem to have been written about you and Yitzhaq Shamir.

[Ben-Aharon] I do not consider that a compliment. It is a far cry from the truth, because Yitzhaq Shamir has determined opinions about everything pertaining to national policy and to the security and future of the State of Israel.

[Shilon] I recall that you criticized David Levi for expressing satisfaction about Saudi Arabia's joining the political process. Did you do that as a civil servant?

[Ben-Aharon] I did not criticize, but I immediately reacted to his statements, and not solely on the basis of my personal opinion. I reacted to the idea in a negative manner, just as today I am not happy about the reports that the Maghreb countries are to send observers to the peace conference. There is something very wrong here. If they continue to maintain the state of war with Israel, it is inconceivable that they should come as observers and sit at the back of the room as though this were the United Nations. There must first be an expression of readiness on their behalf to accept the existence of Israel and to end the state of war.

[Shilon] Now you are once again thumbing your nose at Secretary of State Baker.

[Ben-Aharon] I must express my opinion on this matter when I am certain that it reflects the prime minister's views.

[Shilon] And Baker will again say that Yosi Ben-Aharon is sabotaging the peace process, as he has already said in the past.

[Ben-Aharon] With all due respect to the U.S. secretary of state, whom we all revere, we must safeguard our interests and stand adamant on them.

[Shilon] What right does Israel have to dictate to the Palestinians the composition of their delegation?

[Ben-Aharon] That is not our intention. We do not want to decide who will represent them; however, we cannot accept elements that cannot represent them. Those elements have a different order of priorities than the residents of Judaea and Samaria.

[Shilon] That is virtually the same thing. In practice, you are trying to decide the composition of the Palestinian delegation.

[Ben-Aharon] No, there is a difference. I am talking about the PLO. Heading the PLO's list of priorities is the slogan calling for the right of return. That is not the case with the residents of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. We have a meeting point with the latter, which we do not have with 'Arafat and Abu-Sharif.

[Shilon] Do you not find it odd that Israel, which for all these years has called on the Arabs to hold negotiations without preconditions, is the one placing preconditions today?

[Ben-Aharon] Our position on negotiations without preconditions related to countries. As for the Palestinians, we are not talking about a country or about a peace agreement between Israel and them. We are talking about arrangements to achieve mutual coexistence. Therefore, the entire negotiation technique is different. It also derives from and is stipulated by the Camp David accords.

[Shilon] What can we discuss with the Syrians?

[Ben-Aharon] I know this will sound banal, but we can discuss peace with them. If the Syrians kick off the negotiations with an ultimatum to return the Golan Heights, we may not quit the negotiations at once, but...

[Shilon] But we will leave.

[Ben-Aharon] Not necessarily. We have patience. We will start testing them. We shall ask them what kind of peace they are talking about, what they intend to do about the Jews, what they intend to do about their occupation of Lebanon and about the hospitality they extend to the terrorist organizations in their country. We will also ask them if they are ready to change their Constitution, which denies Israel's right to exist. We will also be willing to hear what they have to say about the Golan Heights. First, however, we will ask for answers to the questions I mentioned.

[Shilon] In other words, Israel will carry out a tactical maneuver designed to portray the Syrians as warmongers and Israel as seeking peace?

[Ben-Aharon] We have yet to discuss and decide on our tactical moves, but that is the way we should conduct the negotiations. We propose to the United States and to all the other parties not to let the political process stop on any condition. Right at the outset, we will try to reach a minimal agreement that war will not be the way to resolve the Middle East problem.

[Shilon] Will we not return one inch of the Golan Heights to the Syrians in return for a comprehensive peace agreement?

[Ben-Aharon] The policy on the Golan Heights was anchored in Knesset resolutions, when Israeli law was applied to the Golan Heights.

[Shilon] Israeli participation in the current move was also based on, among other things, UN Resolutions 242 and 338, which stipulate Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in the Six-Day War. Is there a chance of reaching any kind of accord with the Syrians without giving them what we gave Egypt?

[Ben-Aharon] The UN resolutions you have mentioned contain additional elements, such as the establishment of secure and defensible borders. Therefore we need to reconcile these two elements: withdrawal from territories and establishing defensible borders. The interpretation of Resolution 242 is an issue for negotiations between us and the Syrians. The United States takes the same view of this matter.

[Shilon] The U.S. interpretation is unequivocal: Israeli withdrawal from territories conquered in the Golan Heights.

[Ben-Aharon] The United States made an exception on this point when it told the Arabs that its interpretation of withdrawal refers to all the sectors. This U.S. interpretation has no legal foundation.

[Shilon] Having said that, you have in fact precluded the possibility of any chance of promoting the peace process.

[Ben-Aharon] No. We must sit down to negotiations and persist as long as there is Syrian willingness to continue, until we reach an understanding, even a partial one, and until at least preliminary steps are made toward the establishment of mutual trust. Even that will be a good start. We will not strive to achieve agreements by courting the Syrians or by bowing down to them.

[Shilon] Is Israel really going to strive for partial or interim arrangements?

[Ben-Aharon] I would not rule out interim arrangements, because they constitute a certain progress toward the goal to which we are all striving.

[Shilon] Would you draw a possible model of interim arrangements?

[Ben-Aharon] No, because in our experience, such arrangements involve territorial amendments, and I cannot broach that right now.

[Shilon] You said once that Israel will not join the peace process if violence in the territories does not stop. In practice, the intifadah is growing, and is even moving to the use of firearms. Will negotiations be possible in that atmosphere?

[Ben-Aharon] We did say we would not enter negotiations as long as violence did not stop. It was one of the demands in our political initiative, but it was not an ultimatum. One can even reasonably expect the level of violence to grow, because the political move has much opposition. It is definitely possible that this reality will affect the atmosphere of the negotiations.

[Shilon] And the intifadah will not stop until a political arrangement is reached?

[Ben-Aharon] I am not certain that the intifadah will die out, even after a political solution is found. We know that there are some parties among the Arabs of the territories who oppose every kind of political solution, and we will have to continue coping with them.

[Shilon] What is the significance of the fact that the Egyptian president has not yet met even once with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir?

[Ben-Aharon] I think it is Husni Mubarak's problem.

[Shilon] Have we reached the moment of truth in our relations with the United States?

[Ben-Aharon] Our relations with the United States are very complex. There are many moments of truth in these relations. We are approaching critical moments, and there will be many more such moments in which our relations will be tested. We may assume that at some point the United States will be tempted to take a stand on the essence of arrangements in the Middle East, although I hope that it will not do so, even if crises emerge and even if the Arabs appeal to it and ask for its intervention.

[Shilon] On at least one point the U.S. position has been unshakable: the issue of settlements. Why has Israel chosen this sensitive hour, on the eve of a political process, to take provocative steps?

[Ben-Aharon] We have repeatedly explained to the United States that if we prevent Jews from settling in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, we will be signaling that this area is being kept for the Arabs. That is not our line.

[Shilon] We have already sent enough signals that this area is not being kept for the Arabs. What was the purpose of last week's provocation in the shape of the civilianization of the Eshkolot settlement?

[Ben-Aharon] If we freeze all settlement activity, as the United States asks, we will indeed be signaling to the Arab world, and this will invite a demand that we prepare to evacuate the settlements in due time. It is inconceivable that Jews should be unable to live alongside Arabs in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip.

[Shilon] When money was at stake, when Israel was asking for U.S. guarantees for the absorption of immigrants, we were willing to be more flexible on the issue of settlement.

[Ben-Aharon] Not exactly. We made a gesture because of a Soviet demand, because immigration is for us a supreme question of values, and we did not want any delays whatsoever. That was why we agreed to the condition not to direct immigrants to Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip.

[Shilon] Do you really believe that settlements help the peace process?

[Ben-Aharon] Yes. It may sound outlandish, but I believe that if the Arabs become convinced that we are here for good—and not merely within the 1967 lines, but throughout Eretz Yisra'el—they will come to realize that they need to attain a modus vivendi with us. [passage omitted]

[Shilon] Do you still aspire to the job of ambassador to the United States?

[Ben-Aharon] What I am doing today appeals to me very much, and I do not devote much thought to my career.

[Shilon] If you receive the appointment, will the United States be liable to declare you persona non grata?

[Ben-Aharon] I do not think so. I served many years in the United States, and I came to know and respect deeply many of the manifestations of American society and its regime. It will be hard to categorize me as a person with negative feelings toward them. [passage omitted]

Analysis of Talks With Baker

TA0908144791 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 9 Aug 91 p B1

[Commentary by Yosef Harif: "A Memorandum of Misunderstanding"]

[Text] When U.S. Secretary of State James Baker arrived in Jerusalem last Thursday, in the wake of a telephone accord with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, he did not intend to launch a discussion of the content of the memorandum of understanding with Israel. During the drive from the airport to the prime minister's bureau in Jerusalem, he told Foreign Minister David Levi: Look, I came to receive your "yes," subject to the qualification on which I had agreed with Mr. Shamir with regard to the composition of the Palestinian delegation.

Baker added that most of the points had already been rehashed with the prime minister and the foreign minister. That meant that, ostensibly, one main issue still required action: Those understandings should be given official standing. This was what Jerusalem presumably understood, but for some reason Baker was in no hurry. When, in the course of their first meeting, Shamir handed him the first draft of a memorandum of understanding between Israel and the United States, which had been prepared by his office, Baker did not even glance at the paper. He merely remarked: "We will not deal with this document now. I will send over two aides, who will work on the requested memorandum together with your people."

Shamir did not make the "yes" he gave Baker over the telephone conditional on a prior accord on the memorandum of understanding, but now, according to senior officials in the Prime Minister's Office and in the Foreign Ministry, a struggle is about to begin over the formulation of the memorandum.

Why should a struggle be expected? Has not Foreign Minister Levi—and Shamir also—made it plain that Baker had reached understandings on every sensitive point vital to Israel? Moreover, Minister Levi declared this week at the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that it was not Israel that had said "yes" to Baker, but it was Baker who had said "yes" to Israel. In that case, what more is there to struggle over?

No one can accuse Baker of being naive. It was no accident that the secretary of state refrained from summing up the memorandum of understanding with Israel on that Thursday, when he heard the prime minister utter the much desired "yes." What could have been more natural on that occasion than to remunerate Shamir and to facilitate his task of persuading the cabinet members by bestowing an official stamp on the oral understandings? His failure to do so causes some second thoughts about his intentions. If the memorandum of understanding proposed by Israel does indeed truly reflect "all the understandings" achieved orally with Baker, what was the purpose of troubling his aides to come back to Jerusalem for talks with Israeli officials in the midst of summer vacations?

This week, a rumor circulated that two drafts of the memorandum of understanding were "floating around": one prepared by the Foreign Ministry, another prepared by the Prime Minister's Office and submitted by Shamir to Baker. That story is unfounded. On this matter, there is full coordination between the two offices. It is true that the document submitted to Baker had been prepared by Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein, but it was based on a document he had received from Eytan Bentzur, the Foreign Ministry deputy director general in charge of North American affairs.

It should be said for the Foreign Ministry that it had made an effort to "catalogue" every promise James Baker made during his six visits to Jerusalem, including those made in private conversations; "not one word of Baker got lost." Before handing the final draft to the prime minister, Rubinstein sent it over for the perusal of the foreign minister, who gave his approval. In the words of an official in the Prime Ministers Office: "Since we are probably going to have wars with Baker over clauses of the memorandum of understanding, why do we need wars between Jews, too?"

Thus, the story does not end with the arrival of Baker's officials, Aaron Miller and Dan Kurtzer. It is merely beginning.

Those officials have been authorized to offer remarks, rather than finalize things. The theory prevailing in Jerusalem is that Baker is in no hurry to finalize the memorandum of understanding, and that he would like to gain time. First of all, he does not intend to put down in a written document every single thing he said orally as he was making an effort to conquer the hearts of Shamir and Levi. Second, even if he wants to keep all his promises, he may not wish to do so at once, because he fears that every leak made here for domestic purposes—in a bid to demonstrate the vastness of the government's achievements—may make it difficult for him to obtain an affirmative Palestinian answer on the question of the composition of their delegation.

There is a graver fear, however: namely, that this is not a mere tactical approach on the part of the U.S. secretary of state, but rather a strategic calculation with an eye to the future, aimed at reducing as much as possible the scope of commitments toward Israel. Those who suspect him of this approach ask: Now that he has received the Israeli Government's "yes," what leverage has Israel retained to force the U.S. Administration to reach a memorandum of understanding, as demanded by Israel?

Thus, Baker's personal credence, as well as that of the entire U.S. Administration, is in question. If Baker reneges on his oral promises, it can be presumed that the Israeli Government will not take the next step and will stay away from the proposed peace conference.

What can be the problematic clauses in the memorandum of understanding proposed by Israel?

The first and foremost is this: The Israeli memorandum of understanding suggests that the negotiations with the Palestinians are to be based on a two-track format (that is, a three-year Camp David-style interim arrangement, with negotiations for a permanent arrangement to be held in the second stage) and that "this process is not designed to bring about a Palestinian state." Will Baker approve such an "understanding?"

Another clause of the memorandum says that the Palestinians will be represented within a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation and that the delegates will be Arabs from Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip only. Does Baker intend "to doctor" this understanding, in a bid to cram in someone from East Jerusalem, or will he endorse the clause as it is?

A clause in the Israeli draft, dealing with the noninclusion of the PLO in the process, says that the PLO will not be a partner in the process, either directly or indirectly, and Israel will not sit with anyone with whom it does not wish to sit. A "hypothetical" possibility was raised when this question was discussed with Baker: What happens if, in the course of the opening of the conference or of negotiations, one of the Palestinian rises to say that he views himself as a PLO representative? Baker promised that the United States would give Israel full backing. What if, as a result of such a declaration, Israel withdraws from the negotiations. What will the United States itself do? Will it remain seated?

Israel has another question, which to date has not been clarified by Baker: What is the purpose of negotiations between Israel and Syria? From Israel's point of view, it is obvious that the purpose is a peace accord, similar to the one with Egypt. Syria, however, has so far spoken only of "a comprehensive settlement," and not of full and genuine peace anchored in a written and signed contract.

In the "territorial clause" of the memorandum, Israel proposes that Israel not be required to agree to "territories for peace," that Resolution 242 (which speaks of withdrawal from territories) has diverse interpretations, and that the interpretation of every party will be subject to negotiation. Although Baker did not hesitate to say that in several capitals of this region, Israel has noted that President Bush, in an appearance in Congress at the end of the Gulf war, declared that a Middle East arrangement must be founded on the principle of "territories for peace."

Baker was ready to make a commitment that the Americans would not allow the peace process to develop a parallel track in the UN organizations (one of the proposed clauses of the memorandum of understanding.) This means mainly that the United States will prevent the Arab countries from turning to the Security Council if they find it difficult to obtain everything they want from negotiations. Foreign Minister David Levi demands that in the course of negotiations the United States use its veto also to prevent any other appeal to the Security Council—for instance, a demand that the issue of settlement be debated in the Security Council, on the pretext that it does not belong to the peace process. Will the United States agree to clarify this clause of the memorandum of understanding in accordance with the Israeli approach?

There are a number of clauses that, ostensibly, should not give rise to any difficulties:

—The conference will have no authority to decide or determine, and it will not serve as a stage for discussions and appeals. Its sole purpose is to bring about direct negotiations between the parties.

—Bilateral working groups from Israel and the Arab countries will be formed to promote the implementation of regional development projects.

—A European representative will be present at the opening session.

—A representative of the UN secretary general without a right of speech will be an observer at the opening.

—Every element participating in the process, including the Soviet Union and Europe, undertakes to accept the rules and format agreed upon by the United States.

Baker has sent over some officials—and he has gone on vacation. Shamir has done the same. In Jerusalem, among those readying themselves for battle, there are some who are ready to give the U.S. secretary of state a bit of credit, perhaps as a result of what he said as he was leaving Jerusalem: The Israeli "aye," he stressed, has placed responsibility on the Palestinians alone!

Shamir Aide Sees Elections Moved Up to Winter

TA0908180491 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1700 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] The director general of the prime minister's office, Yosi Ahime'ir, says he believes the elections will be moved forward to this coming winter. He made the assessment at a meeting today with 200 Likud Central Committee members in Haifa. Ahime'ir said he is opposed to the proposal calling for the direct election of the prime minister. He noted that there is no country where the prime minister is elected directly. Nevertheless, Ahime'ir said he supported changes in the electoral law, including greater powers to the prime minister and raising the minimum number of votes to enter the Knesset.

Full Ties With USSR Expected 'Next Month'

TA0908175091 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1705 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] The Soviet Union will announce the resumption of full diplomatic ties with the State of Israel next month, in the course of Foreign Minister David Levi's meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh at the UN General Assembly session in New York. This report comes from our Moscow-based correspondent Mikha'el Karpin.

Our correspondent adds that the ceremony of resuming relations will be held several days later in Jerusalem and Moscow, where the representations will be upgraded to embassies.

Simultaneously, the Moscow municipality announced this afternoon that it is bestowing official recognition on the Jewish Agency, which will open formal offices in Moscow. The announcement was made by the Moscow mayor to Jewish Agency Chairman Simha Dinitz.

The news was confirmed tonight by the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem. The ministry said that Israel is glad about the announcement and that it wishes to point out that Israel has always believed the previous situation was improper.

Two Palestinians Killed by Army Gunfire

TA1008133691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Excerpt] Stones were hurled at an Israeli car this afternoon in the area of Gat Shmanim in East Jerusalem. A female passenger sustained slight injuries from glass shards. She received instant treatment from members of a Border Police unit. This was reported by our police affairs correspondent Moshe Nussbaum.

Near Damascus Gate, an empty bottle was thrown at a Jewish Western Wall usher. The man, who was slightly injured in the head, was taken to Sha'arey Tzedeq Hospital.

In two incidents in Samaria, two residents were today killed by soldiers' gunfire. Army sources told our correspondent Moti Amir that in the Nabulus casbah, an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] unit encountered a knife-wielding youth. The youth did not heed calls to halt, was shot, and later died in a hospital.

Near the exit from Tulkarm, an IDF patrol encountered three masked men who had blocked the road with tires and were wielding a gas-filled bottle. After the soldiers' calls to halt went unheeded, the troops fired, shooting dead one of the three.

The IDF has closed both areas and launched searches for the masked men in Tulkarm. The circumstances of the two incidents are being investigated. [passage omitted]

Jerusalem Police Chief Links Violence, Talks

TA1108063891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Commander Hayim Albaldes, commander of the Jerusalem Police, has said that over the last week there has been an escalation in intifadah incidents in East Jerusalem in an attempt by extreme elements to foil the political process. Speaking with our correspondent, Commander Albaldes said that tension is felt in the Arab streets and that the incidents of stone throwing and mass demonstrations over the last week have reached a level that was not seen during the past six months. He noted that the police have increased their activity in coordination with the Army and will employ a strong-arm policy.

The police command and other security elements will discuss the situation in East Jerusalem later today.

Palestinian Kills UNESCO Head, Injures Others

JN1108114191 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1106 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] An official source has stated the following: At 0820 [0520 GMT] today, Sunday, 8 August 1991, during a meeting of the UNESCO Regional Bureau in Amman, a man named Subhi Yusuf Khalil Sukkar, who works as a driver in the bureau, opened fire with a pistol at those in the meeting. The incident resulted in the death of Dr. Hamid al-Khawwad, a Sudanese, who is the director of the Amman Bureau of UNESCO. Two other employees present in the hall were injured, one seriously. The injured were admitted to hospital where they were given the necessary treatment.

Preliminary investigation reveals that the cause of the murder was a difference concerning work at the bureau. Security forces are continuing to hunt for the culprit, who fled after committing the murder. This has caused widespread regret and shock because our country is unfamiliar with this type of deed. It runs counter to the noble values of our people and society, making the murder all the more regrettable and abhorrent and calling for denunciation on both the popular and official level.

Details of Shooting

JN1108120391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1135 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Amman, 11 Aug (INA)—Hamid al-Khawwad, acting director Amman's UNESCO bureau, was killed in Amman today when his driver stormed the assembly hall and fired several shots at him. Also, his female secretary and another driver sustained wounds as a result of the shooting. The driver fled the scene of the incident. It has been learned from Jordanian Public Security sources that a statement will be issued on the incident. Sources close to the culprit said that he committed this act after he had learned that UNESCO will reduce its services and lay off its employees. It was also said that the culprit suffers from psychological problems.

Murder Not Political

JN1108155291 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1505 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Abdallah al-Nusur by correspondent Salim 'Ali Dhiyab in Amman on 11 August—recorded]

[Text] [Dhiyab] Mr. Minister, what is your comment on the criminal killing of the UNESCO official in Amman?

[Al-Nusur] Sir, this is an isolated incident with no political significance at all. It has to do with a labor dispute between an employee and his superior. As far as I know, the killer suffers from a mental disorder, and I hope this is the case because Jordan is a country of security and stability where weapons should not be used to solve problems. Hopefully, it should not be concluded that security in Jordan is disturbed or diplomats are targets of attacks. This has never happened, and we hope that it will not happen. Again, this is an individual and isolated incident without any political implications whatsoever. The Jordanian Government extends condolences to the family of the deceased whom we knew and respected. He was a great Arab thinker, a friend, and lover of Jordan who had long fostered education and culture in this country. His loss is indeed great, and we hope the culprit will be caught. We also hope the family of the deceased will accept the Jordanian Government's condolences.

Further on Reasons for Killing

JN1208115091 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 12 Aug 91 p 22

["A Stand" column by Hamadah Fara'inah: "Victims of a Hasty Policy"]

[Text] We reject and consider unacceptable the motives, reasons, and causes of the tragic and painful incident that resulted in the death of UNESCO's acting regional director in Jordan. Such an act contradicts our Arab and Islamic norms, values, and characteristics, our behavior, and national, pan-Arab, and humanitarian upbringing. It is nothing more than a personal, individual, and sick reaction which does not go beyond the scope of its perpetrator.

All those who knew the late Hamid Khawwad will know the extent of this great loss, UNESCO's loss and the loss for Jordanians and the rest of the Arabs, of this good man who was known for his humility and kind heart. He was also known for the fine moral standards he applied to his ranking position and the responsibility he carried.

Who, however, should bear responsibility for this sick reaction? Does it not fall on those who made decisions without considering their effect on the lives of the employees, and the prevailing atmosphere in our region? Isn't their decision to move the regional headquarters from Amman a political mistake through which they intend to punish Jordan for the pan-Arab and humanitarian policies regarding the people of Iraq and Palestine, and for not yielding before tyranny?

UNESCO is not the only one that has committed this mistake. There are regional and Arab organizations that have made and continue to make the same hasty decisions. Active Jordanian employees are being punished by indiscriminate lay-offs, despite the fact that their employment records show them to be capable, competent, good performers, and even loyal to the ideas and missions of these organizations. They are laid off for unjustified political and subjective reasons or the headquarters of these organizations are moved elsewhere or efforts are being made to move them, after Jordanians opened their arms wide to the activities and work of these organizations and provided them with all the official and popular facilities, whether or not they were required.

The measures and motives behind moving some international and regional organizations from Jordan and the indiscriminate lay-offs of the Jordanian employees of these organizations are not merely financial. They are more or less measures against Jordan, its people, system, and democratic option.

RJO Statement Issued on U.S. Hostage Release

NC1008104591 Paris AFP in English 1025 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Excerpt] Beirut, Aug 10 (AFP)—[passage omitted] Besides Mr. Cicippio, a 60-year-old accountant at the American University of Beirut kidnapped September 12, 1986, the RJO [Revolutionary Justice Organization] is also holding another American, Edward Tracy, 60, seized October 21, 1986.

"The issue of (Lebanese and Palestinian) prisoners remains a priority and is the key to any settlement (of the hostage issue)," the [RJO] statement said. "Our purpose is not to take hostages to keep them, as everything has an end."

Pro-Iranian Shiite groups, believed to hold most of the 12 Westerners in Lebanon, have demanded that Israel release some 400 Lebanese Shiite and Palestinian prisoners, most of whom are detained in Israeli-controlled southern Lebanon.

"Syria is still undertaking efforts to reach positive solutions and this release will crown those efforts," the RJO said at midday Saturday. It stressed that "Iran has also participated in sponsoring these efforts and has provided logistical support."

"We maintain that the Shaykh Abd al-Karim 'Ubayd matter is a priority and that the expected positive results will be realized with the liberation of our brothers." Shaykh 'Ubayd, a Lebanese Shiite cleric, was abducted by Israeli commandos in southern Lebanon in July 1989.

Edward Tracy Released

NC1108101891 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1017 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] The U.S. hostage released in Lebanon who is now en route to Damascus is Edward Tracy, according to security sources cited by REUTER a short time ago.

Cicippio Release Announced

NC1008115391 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1134 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] A new development took place today as the Revolutionary Justice Organization [RJO] said that it will release Joseph Cicippio, one of the two American hostages it is holding, within 72 hours. The RJO handed a statement to a foreign news agency in Beirut, calling on UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar to go to Damascus to receive Cicippio.

Reportage on Kidnapping of Frenchman Leyraud

'Assassination' of Peace Efforts

NC0908124191 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] French Ambassador Daniel Husson has initiated contacts with various Lebanese officials in connection with the kidnapping of Frenchman Jerome Leyraud, calling on Interior Minister Sami al- Khatib at 1300 today to discuss the kidnapping. Husson also met with a number of officials during which he called for urgent efforts to ascertain Leyraud's fate.

Following his meeting with the French ambassador, the interior minister held a news conference in which he announced that the kidnapping of Jerome Leyraud is tantamount to the assassination of Beirut's peace, saying: We will not allow Beirut's security to be assassinated, and we will shoulder our responsibility to the end. Minister al-Khatib announced that the state authorities are holding the first clues in the case and are ready to follow them up, noting that the internal security council will meet tomorrow to discuss the issue and draw up a comprehensive plan of action.

Fadlallah Condemns Seizure

NC0908163891 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] In his Friday sermon today, 'Allamah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah condemned the kidnapping of the French national. He added: We strongly condemn the kidnapping of this young man. We want the file of the hostages closed, and we want the foreigners in Lebanon to be safe.

In a statement the WASHINGTON POST, Fadlallah stated that he had heard the hardliners in Iran saying that there is a strong desire to end the hostage issue, because this issue no longer has great influence over the course of events.

Hizballah Issues Denunciation

NC0908203491 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2020 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli has said that the kidnapping of the Frenchman in Lebanon was organized by the enemies of Islam to distort the image of Muslims because the governments of some Western countries want to make their people believe that Islam is their enemy.

A responsible Hizballah source has denounced the kidnapping of French national Jerome Leyraud as a stab at Beirut's security, in which the party actively participated in achieving. The source expressed hope that this file will be closed quickly so that it will not be exploited by those lying in wait for Muslim causes.

More on Hizballah Statement

NC1008064191 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Yesterday Hizballah issued the following statement in Beirut denouncing the abduction of Frenchman Jerome Leyraud: We denounce the abduction of the Frenchman in West Beirut because it is a blow to Lebanese security, which we helped establish.

The statement adds: The kidnapping neither helps the oppressed nor assists the efforts to close ranks against Israel. In fact, it diverts attention from the acts of aggression the usurping entity wages daily in the south.

Hizballah expressed its hope that this issue will be resolved very soon so as not to be used by those who wish evil for our people.

French Military Mission Arrives

NC1008063291 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Our security correspondent has learned that a French military mission, composed of a high-ranking officer and four colonels, secretly arrived in Beirut yesterday afternoon and was escorted to the French Embassy by a phalanx of security guards.

Interior Minister Comments

NC1008140991 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Interview with Interior Minister Sami al-Khatib by unidentified reporter following a meeting of the internal security council in Beirut on 10 August—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Khatib] We convened a meeting of the internal security council which was attended by the director general of the public security forces and Lieutenant Colonel Rustum, representative of the Syrian security and surveillance apparatus of the Syrian Arab forces in Lebanon, among others. We discussed ways to secure the release of French hostage Jerome Leyraud. We have set up an operations room at the Interior Ministry to assess the information collected by the various departments. We will draw up our military action plan, which may include storming and other operations, on the basis of this assessment.

We also formulated a plan to enable the intelligence organs to collect information in a thorough and round-the-clock fashion. The public prosecutor's office will issue the necessary warrants to all security organs for any storming operations. The public prosecutor's office will ask all its branches throughout the country to follow instructions and to help secure the release of the French hostage.

This is what we decided at the internal security council. In short, we want to act, not talk. What is most important is to obtain the French hostage's release as soon as possible.

[Reporter] Your Excellency, how true are reports about the warning to the kidnappers?

[Al-Khatib] We are acting in accordance with the law, and the kidnappers are well aware of our seriousness.

RJO Statement Reported

NC1008170791 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 10 Aug 91

["Text" of "handwritten communique" distributed by the Revolutionary Justice Organization, RJO, in Beirut on 10 August]

[Text] In the name of the all-powerful and Almighty:

Following intensive efforts and diligent endeavors to solve the problem of the detainees and in light of recent developments, the RJO declares:

1. For years we have been seeking to obtain the release of our brothers held in the prisons of the world, and have chosen those methods we considered appropriate. The taking of hostages was one one such method, and was intended solely to bring about our brothers' release and not to serve any other purpose. We have stood fast despite many difficulties and we have challenged big states. We have proved that their force is a hollow one, incapable of doing anything. Events have always moved toward an inescapable conclusion, which is that the issue of detainees remains a priority and is the key to a solution. We never took hostages just for the sake of keeping them, as everything has an end. The hostages can either be released or killed. The issue has remained unsettled because of the insistence by some on being arrogant and unclear. All of us are moving seriously toward a solution.

2. The United Nations launched an initiative and negotiations took place with Perez de Cuellar. These negotiations were completed with his special envoy Giandomenico Picco. Important horizons were opened for negotiations on influential international levels. We saw quick results, which prompted us to fulfill our share of the obligations. A U.S. hostage will be released within 72 hours. We asked Picco to go in Damascus to receive the hostage and ensure the presence of the United Nations, whose role in solving this crisis we wish to upgrade as long as it acts and gives results. Completion of the road requires that the other parties concerned fulfill their obligations. We recall that Perez de Cuellar has spared no opportunity to stress privately and publicly that there are prospects for a solution.

Syria has always undertaken efforts to reach positive solutions. We have always respected its desire and responded to it. The release operation will crown Syria's diligent efforts, for which we are thankful. Iran has also participated in sponsoring the negotiations and promoting the dialogue. It has also provided logistical support. We hope matters will proceed as Syria and Iran desire. We hope that the results will always be positive.

Finally, we reiterate that the issue of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd is a priority and that the expected positive results will be realized with the release of our brothers. The attempt to exert pressure and take a negative stand and to evade obligations will mean that matters get out of hand, with unpredictable consequences.

Victory is for the oppressed in the march of liberation. Justice, glory, and immortality for the martyrs.

UN Envoy Returns to Damascus

NC1008182691 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1815 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Giandomenico Picco, personal envoy of the UN secretary general, spent 24 hours in Lebanon, during which time he met with Shiite officials. A UN source said that Picco returned to Damascus this morning.

Leyraud Freed 11 Aug, Said in 'Good Health'

NC1108050591 Paris AFP in English 0345 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Beirut, Aug 11 (AFP) - Police said French aid worker Jerome Leyraud was freed before dawn Sunday, less than 60 hours after his kidnappers seized him and threatened to kill him if more Western hostages were released in Lebanon.

Security forces found the 26-year-old Leyraud bound hand and foot in a Shiite Moslem southern suburb, Lebanese police chief Muhammad Qubrusli said, adding that he would be handed over to the French ambassador soon.

The Organization for the Defense of Prisoners' Rights announced his release in a statement read over the telephone to a Western news agency here and police confirmed that he was in their custody a half hour later. The statement, "to the relatives of the brothers held in the prisons of justice and aggression" said Leyraud's release came after "efforts undertaken by all parties and guarantees on a link between the entire prisoner issue, especially those held in the prisons of the Zionist enemy."

"We are announcing that we are giving a chance to these efforts to obtain the release of all our mujahiedin (Muslim fighters) so we are freeing the Frenchman Jerome Leyraud," the statement said.

A police official said that the release came after a massive search by Lebanese and Syrian Army troops in the Lebanese capital. A senior Syrian military official said Saturday to expect Leyraud's release in the coming hours.

The kidnappers had threatened to kill the 26-year-old worker with the Paris-based Medicins du Monde if another Western hostage were freed. They abducted Leyraud hours after Islamic Jihad released Briton John McCarthy on Thursday. McCarthy was released with a letter for the United Nations regarding a comprehensive solution to the hostage crisis in Lebanon.

"Jerome Leyraud is in my office, he is in good health and he will be turned over to French Ambassador Daniel Husson at the office of the Minister of the Interior," Qubrusli said in a telephone interview.

RJO on Hostage Release

NC1108064291 Paris AFP in English 0626 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Beirut, Aug 11 (AFP) - The full text of the statement issued by the Revolutionary Justice Organization [RJO] is as follows:

"In the name of God, the All Mighty,

"In the light of developments and the positive and encouraging atmosphere surrounding negotiations in progress to settle the case of our brethren detained in prisons the world over, foremost among them Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd, the Rjo announces the following:

"We have advanced to Sunday 12:00 hours (0900 GMT) the release of the American hostage. We stress that the United Nations representative in Beirut and the envoys of Presidents al-Asad (Hafiz al-Asad of Syria) and Rafsanjani ('Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani of Iran) should make their way to Hotel Beaurivage (in Beirut) to welcome the hostage.

"So as not to delay the release, it is requested that they arrive at the appointment on time."

More Details on Leyraud Release

NC1108073391 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Jerome Leyraud, the Frenchman kidnapped last Thursday, was released at dawn today.

According to the reports from official Lebanese sources, an Internal Security Forces patrol found Leyraud in the Corniche al-Mazra'ah area, at a crossroads leading to the al-Sharq al-Awsat Hospital, at 0500 this morning.

The sources added that the Internal Security Forces patrol transported Leyraud to the house of Interior Minister Major General Sami al-Khatib and that French Ambassador Daniel Husson was summoned to the house. Ambassador Husson arrived at 0600 with a team of the Medecins du Monde organization to which Leyraud belongs was also summoned. Major General Muhammad Qubrusli, commander of the Internal Security Forces; and Brigaider General Samir Sha'rani, commander of the Beirut police, also went to the al-Khatib's home.

Reports indicate that Leyraud was taken to al-Hilu barracks before going to al-Khatib's home. He was reportedly accompanied by French Ambassador Daniel Husson, French Embassy staffers, officers from the Lebanese Army and internal Security Forces, and Syrian forces' officers.

A news conference was held at Minister al-Khatib's home during which Leyraud spoke, saying that he was kidnapped in a supermarket in the Verdun area, taken to an apartment, and had been treated well and not beaten. Leyraud reportedly said that his kidnappers reassured him that he would be released soon and that his life was not in danger.

Minister al-Khatib asked Leyraud not to give any more details of his ordeal and welcomed Leyraud back. The minister praised the Lebanese security agencies—the Internal Security Forces and the army —for their efforts and thanked Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad for the efforts the Syrian forces made in securing Leyraud's release. Minister al-Khatib told Leyraud that he and other foreigners in Lebanon should understand that they are safe here.

The French ambassador congratulated Leyraud on his release and thanked the security agencies for their efforts leading to Leyraud's release. He said that the kidnapping should not affect the resumption of the peace process in Lebanon.

After the news conference, Minister al-Khatib and Ambassador Husson contacted President al-Hirawi at the temporary presidential headquarters to inform him of the details of the release

Leyraud Leaves for Home

NC1108162291 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1545 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] French hostage Jerome Leyraud, who was freed today by the Organization for the Defense of Prisoners' Rights, left Beirut for Nice, France, at 1700 today on board a special French military aircraft. Leyraud was seen off at the airport by French Ambassador Daniel Husson and representatives of the humanitarian organization Medicins du Monde.

Interior Minister Adopts New Stand on Kidnappers

LD1108161191 Paris France-Inter Radio Network in French 1100 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Lebanese authorities have decided to display firmness. Laxity in dealing with terrorism is over if the interior minister, Sami Khatib, can be believed. He talked with Alain Meynargues:

[Begin recording] [Khatib] From now on we will not accept that kidnappers can be as free as they were. We will punish those who abduct people. It will not be like the past: In the past we were delighted simply when the victims were freed. This time, and from now on, we will not only accept the release of victims, but the kidnappers will have to face trial.

[Meynargues] Is this also valid for kidnappers already holding hostages?

[Khatib] These hostages comes within the framework of a broader dialogue between states outside Lebanon. [end recording]

Syrians Impose Harsh Measures in al-Biqa'

NC1108172591 Paris AFP in English 1702 GMT 11 Aug 91

[By Michel Castex]

[Text] Beirut, Aug 11 (AFP)—Factions here favouring a global settlement to the hostage issue under U.N. leadership on Sunday dealt a crushing defeat to fundamentalist Shiites who had tried to torpedo releases by seizing 26-year-old French aid worker Jerome Leyraud.

After coming under considerable military and political pressure, with Iran and Syria playing key roles, Leyraud's kidnappers were forced to free him in the early hours of the morning despite having threatened to execute him if another Western hostage were released.

Leyraud was abducted on Thursday, just hours after British hostage John McCarthy was freed after five years in captivity.

The kidnapping came the same day that Islamic Jihad, best known of the shadowy organizations operating in Lebanon and strongly linked to Iran, had embarked on a process of releasing its captives as part of an overall resolution of the hostage issue.

Islamic Jihad gave McCarthy a message described as "extremely important" to deliver personally to U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar. The two met Sunday in England and Perez de Cuellar then left the country without commenting on the letter, which he said he could not read because it was in Arabic.

The fact that Tracy was freed within hours of Leyraud's liberation shows the release process is on track again, analysts say. The American emerged in Damascus and made a brief statement to the press, recalling McCarthy's release three days earlier.

An official Lebanese source who asked not to be identified told AFP there would be rapid new developments, with the liberation of another U.S. hostage "within the next two or three days, at the latest."

The speed with which Leyraud's kidnappers backed down and freed him shows that the most radical of the Shiite Moslem fundamentalists active in Lebanon are rapidly losing influence.

Shaykh 'Abbas al-Musawi, new secretary general of the pro-Iranian Hizballah (Party of God) group, appears to support the moderate line currently prevailing in Tehran—in sharp contrast to his predecessor, Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli.

Lebanese Interior Minister Sami al-Khatib thanked Syria, whose forces played an active role in searching for the young Frenchman, and said legal action would be taken against his abductors.

"In the past, we were too happy to see the victims released. But starting today, we're going to take legal action against the kidnappers," al-Khatib said.

"We shall not allow the kidnappers to go free," he added implying the authorities knew who they were, as a well-informed source indeed confirmed to AFP.

On Saturday the Syrian army clamped draconian security measures on eastern Lebanon's al-Biqa' Valley, where the pro-Iranian fundamentalists are entrenched.

Roadblocks sprang up in villages near Ba'labakk, stronghold of Hizballah's former leader Shaykh al-Tufayli, who supports the hardliners in Tehran.

The Leyraud episode momentarily raised fears that the era of kidnapping of Westerners, which appeared to have ended in Lebanon two years ago, had returned.

In Beirut, analysts said it might now be used to bring the pro-Iranian fundamentalists under control and force them to stop acting merely in the context of what goes on in Iranian domestic politics.

Previously, because of the threat hanging over the lives of Western hostages, the Lebanese Government avoided clamping down on the fundamentalists, and their militias have not yet been disarmed.

Islamic Jihad Message on Hostages Reported

NC1208103691 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Text] In the message former British hostage John McCarthy gave to UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar, the Islamic Jihad Organization has declared its readiness to release the hostages it holds within 24 hours in exchange for the release of the Arab prisoners held in Israel and Europe.

Israel's Lubrani on Possible Exchange of Prisoners

NC0908170891 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] Uri Lubrani, coordinator of Israeli activities in Lebanon, stressed today that Israel intends to release only the persons captured in Lebanon within the framework of a possible exchange of prisoners.

In an interview with AFP, he said: We are ready to start negotiations on the release of Lebanese or Palestinians captured in Lebanon in return for our prisoners. But, he added, we do not intend to release Palestinian terrorists captured in Israel or at sea. He said that the release of between 200 and 300 Lebanese in return for Israeli soldiers looks to be a possible arrangement.

Lubrani reiterated the Israeli offer to hold a comprehensive exchange of hostages if Israel becomes convinced its soldiers would be released. He revealed that Israel has encouraged Major General Antoine Lahd, commander of the South Lebanese Army, to release 40 prominent Shiite prisoners, stressing that Israel has not asked for anything in return.

Gunmen Kidnap UNIFIL Soldier on Border

NC1008105691 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1045 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] REUTER, citing security sources, reports that a short while ago gunmen kidnapped a Finnish soldier operating with the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] in the occupied border strip. REUTER said that gunmen in white Volvo intercepted the Finnish soldier, who was in his car between Ibil al-Saqi and Qa'qa'iyat al- Jisr in the occupied border strip today, and kidnapped him.

UNIFIL Denies Abduction

NC1108061891 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Official United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon [UNIFIL] spokesman Timor Goksel has told the NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY that the Finnish soldier reported kidnapped was actually shopping, buying food supplies for his contingent, when he saw friends and joined them for a 10-minute ride. Goksel said that the reporter who released the news of the abduction had jumped to conclusions.

Goksel also noted that an explosion took place near a Nepalese UNIFIL position west of Yatar, near Sidon, which left three soldiers injured, two seriously.

Statement Says Army Released 20 Palestinians

NC1008120791 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] The National Defense Ministry's Information Department issued the following statement today:

Twenty Palestinian detainees were released today and handed over to the Palestinian National Salvation Front following military police investigations.

Jazzin Resistance Front Claims Attacks on 10 Aug

NC1008141891 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] The Jazzin resistance front today claimed responsibility for two operations against the occupation forces and their agents. The front said that one of its units ambushed two vehicles belonging to the Israeli-agent intelligence forces at the western approach to Jazzin at 0230 today, wounding agent official Antoine Tayyar and one of his bodyguards.

In the second operation, another of the front's units and an agent patrol clashed for 10 minutes, using rockets and various types of machine guns, after the unit attacked the patrol near the Batir crossing point. Lahd's agents brought armored vehicles to the scene, closed the Batir-Jazzin crossing, and conducted searches, the front added.

VOL Reports German Couple Deported 'Today'

NC1008164691 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Lebanese authorities today deported the German couple who were thought to have been kidnapped. The couple were found in the south, where they were working for Palestinian parties. The two were put aboard a plane heading for Geneva.

Shakkur Calls for Release of Prisoners in Israel

JN1108144891 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1415 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Damascus—Assistant Foreign Minister Yusuf Shakkur handed over U.S. hostage Edward Austin Tracy to U.S. Charge d'Affaires in Damascus John Craig this afternoon. In a statement to a SANA correspondent, Mr. Tracy said he was extremely happy to be released and returned to his family. He thanked the Syrian Government for its extensive efforts to secure his release.

Afterward, Mr. Tracy held a news conference attended by Mr. Shakkur and Mr. Craig. Early in the conference, Mr. Shakkur said: We are happy about the release of yet another hostage, Edward Tracy, and hope that the success in obtaining the release of McCarthy and Tracy, and the swift release of French hostage Jerome Leyraud, will mark the beginning of the closure of the file on all hostages. He added: You have undoubtedly noticed that Syria, at the directive of President Hafiz al-Asad, has been constantly trying to end the plight of the hostages. We hope this will lead to the release of all the Lebanese and Palestinians held in Israeli prisons, especially Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd.

At the news conference, Mr. Tracy thanked Syrian officials for their efforts, which led to his release. At the end of the conference, Charge d'Affaires John Craig, speaking in the name of U.S. President George Bush, thanked President Hafiz al-Asad for his personal concern about the release of the hostages. He also thanked the Syrian Government for its efforts to obtain their release. He expressed happiness over Tracy's release and said: We hope this glad occasion today will be part of deeper stability and enhanced national reconciliation in Lebanon. He added: As we see Tracy released, we should not forget the other hostages of various nationalities.

Iran's Interior Minister Meets Counterpart

LD1008171991 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] The second round of talks between the interior ministers of Iran and Syria took place in Damascus today. In the discussions, a memorandum of understanding on consular facilities, a campaign against drug smuggling, and the exchange of expertise and intelligence between the two countries' law enforcement forces was drafted. In the session the two interior ministers once again emphasized the need to form a strategic bond between the two countries, defend the just rights of the Palestinian people, and struggle against the regime occupying Qods until the return of the occupied territories to Muslims. Interior Minister Nuri also met with 'Allamah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, a prominent member of the Lebanese ulema, at the Islamic Republic of Iran's embassy this afternoon. They discussed issues related to the region.

Meets PFLP-GC, Others

LD1108103391 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Ahmad Jibril, the secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC], and (Fathi Shaqaqi) of the Islamic Jihad Organization of Palestine held separate meetings with Interior Minister Nuri at the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Damascus yesterday. In the meetings, regional issues, notably those related to Palestine, were discussed by the two sides. Ahmad Jibril praised Iran for its adopted stands in respect to the Palestinian issue, in particular on the American peace conference. He emphasized the PFLP-GC will abide by its stance until the realization of the Palestinian nation's rights.

Dr. (Shaqaqi), having thanked His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i for his adopted stands on Palestine, described Iran's as the sole supporter of the Palestinian nation. Mr. Nuri, in turn, having declared our country's stance in respect of the Palestinian issue, stressed the need for continuous resistance by Palestinian people inside the occupied territories.

Comments on Damascus Talks, Hostages

JN1108131091 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Iranian Interior Minister Hojjat-ol-Eslam 'Abdollah Nuri has praised the results of his visit to the Syrian Arab Republic and his meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad. He also praised the strong relations which are being reinforced continuously between the two countries. Hojjat-ol-Eslam Nuri noted at a news conference in Damascus today that the objective of his visit, which came at the invitation of Syrian Interior Minister Dr. Muhammad Harbah, is to reinforce relations between the two countries within the framework of Iranian-Syrian joint cooperation and coordination.

He said that these relations, which reached their peak last year with President Hafiz al-Asad's visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran and by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's visit to Syria, have been strengthened and developed more than ever before.

Hojjat-ol-Eslam Nuri added: During our talks with the Syrian interior minister, we exchanged views on issues related to the residence of nationals in one another's countries, consular issues, and all issues within the purview of the two interior ministries. We also discussed issues related to the two ministries.

On whether the Syrian agreement on the peace efforts has affected Syrian-Iranian relations, the Iranian minister said: The Syrian stance is not new. The Syrian brothers are reiterating a firm stance. Moreover, Syrian-Iranian relations are so strong and so deep that they cannot be affected by attempts to undermine them regardless of events in the region. Furthermore, Syria is not a country that changes positions. It did not and will *not change its principled positions.*

On whether there is any connection between the Iranian minister's visit and the release of British hostage John McCarthy, Hojjat-ol-Eslam Nuri said: We learned and heard about it from the press.

Asked if Iran will play a role to obtain the release of the rest of the foreign hostages, the Iranian minister said: We are very clear and open about all that has been said about the hostages and their situation. Our stance was, still is, and will remain as follows: We object to, condemn, and reject hostage taking. We have said and reiterated that we reject such acts. We expect and hope that those who are holding hostages will give up these methods and release all the hostages they are holding. Like any country in the world, we do our utmost to achieve this goal because, as I said and I reiterate, we reject hostage taking and will try all available means to prevent these operations from occurring in the international arena, worldwide, or in the region.

The Iranian minister added: We completely reject kidnapping and the holding of hostages. We reject the kidnapping and holding of any person, no matter who, and we want everybody to think of it in the same manner.

Asked if the talks dealt with security in the Gulf, the Iranian minister said: We did not deal with this issue in our talks.

On Iran's relationship to the Palestine question, the Iranian minister said: We maintain very good relations with the Palestinian people. These relations are the strongest and deepest relations that could be established with the Palestinian people.

Concluding the conference, the Iranian interior minister expressed profound gratitude to Interior Minister Dr. Muhammad Harbah, wishing the Syrian leadership, government, and people continuous progress, success, and prosperity.

Supports Release of 'All' Hostages

LD1108160591 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Mr. Nuri, the interior minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, at a news conference in Damascus today replied to questions put to him by reporters. He emphasized the clear stance adopted by our country in opposing every kind of hostage taking and condemned those who attempt to link the Islamic Republic of Iran with hostage taking.

The interior minister added: We are doing everything we can for the release of all the hostages, but Western governments are expressing concern solely for the fate of western hostages and are not paying attention to the fate of Iranian, Palestinian, and Lebanese hostages. Mr. Nuri declared that the Islamic Republic of Iran will never officially recognize the Zionist regime and condemned the proposal put forward by America for peace in the Middle East.

Makes Statement, Departs

JN1108170191 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Excerpts] Iranian Interior Minister Hojjat-ol-Eslam 'Abdollah Nuri and his delegation left Damascus this afternoon, ending a five-day visit to Syria. [passage omitted] In a predeparture statement to SANA, the minister said he was happy with the visit and thanked the Syrian Government and people and struggler President Hafiz al-Asad. He noted that there has been an all around development of ties between Syria and Iran, especially between the Interior Ministries. As I leave Damascus, I can only say we had very successful and useful talks concerning our common interests, he said.

Algeria's Ibrahimi Arrives With Bendjedid Message

JN0908164191 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1625 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] Damascus, 9 Aug (SANA)—Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Ibrahimi arrived in Damascus today on a visit to Syria. He was received at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', senior Foreign Ministry officials, the Algerian charge d'affaires in Damascus, and the embassy staff.

In a statement to a SANA correspondent, Mr. Ibrahimi said that he is carrying a message to President Hafiz al-Asad from President Chadli Bendjedid. He added that he will also exchange views with the Syrian officials on issues of interest to the Arab nation at this stage, especially since consultation and cooperation with the brothers in Syria is one of the pillars of Algeria's Arab and foreign policy. He said that this is a tradition which we continue to follow in Algeria.

Discusses Peace With al-Asad

JN1008173891 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1715 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Ibrahimi at 1130 today. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. Mr. Ibrahimi conveyed to President Hafiz al-Asad a message from Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid. The president asked him to convey a reply and his best wishes to President Bendjedid and the fraternal people of Algeria.

Their talks revolved around the peace process in the region as part of the cooperation and coordination between the two countries. They agreed to continue contacts between the two sides to exchange ideas about the coming steps. They also reviewed Arab events and affirmed the importance of working on improving the Arab situation.

Afghanistan

Report on Release of Soviet POW

BK1108120691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1158 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Islamabad, Aug 11 (AFP)—The Afghan resistance will release a Soviet prisoner of war here Monday in the presence of a Soviet delegation currently visiting Pakistan, the mojahedin MIDIA news agency said.

Sunday's announcement said Qurban Ali Tashrifov, 25, who was captured in 1984 in the Torghundi region in northwestern Afghanistan, near the Soviet border, would be freed by the Jamiat-e Eslami faction headed by Burhanuddin Rabbani.

"Hopefully," it said, the father of the Soviet soldier would be on hand.

Further on POW Release

BK1208061491 Hong Kong AFP in English 0613 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Text] Islamabad, Aug 12 (AFP)—The Afghan resistance freed a Soviet prisoner of war here Monday in the presence of a senior Soviet official., Qurban Ali Tashrifov, 25, was handed over to the Soviet ambassador-at-large, Nikolay Ivanovic Kozyrev, at a ceremony at a local hotel.

Rebel sources said the Kabul government, which promised to free 25 mojahedin fighters in return for Tashrifov's release, had already released five including an Arab. Another 10 mojahedin prisoners will be freed over a week in two batches, the sources said, adding that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) had guaranteed that the remaining 10 would also be released.

Abdul Hamid Minhaj, director of the rebel news agency MIDIA here, who is also a member of the Jamiat e-Islami, supervised the release which began with recitation from Moslem holy book Koran.

'Major' Missile Attack Launched on Zabol

BK1208025691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Text] In Afghanistan, mojahedin have reportedly carried out a major missile and artillery attack on Zabol city and the Kabul regime's military headquarters there, causing heavy losses to Kabul forces. They also captured several military posts in various operations in Lowgar, Paghman, Qandahar, Kabul, Ghowr, and Samangan Provinces, besides killing a number of soldiers and militiamen.

Mojahedin Attack Ghazni Cantonment, 20 Killed

BK0908132691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1300 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] In Afghanistan, mojahedin conducted a surprise attack on the cantonment of Ghazni City, killing at least 20 Kabul troops and destroying a large number of arms and ammunition. Meanwhile, reports from Afghanistan speak of fierce fighting between mojahedin and Kabul troops in various parts of the country. In another development, a commander of Kabul troops along with 40 soldiers and two officers joined the ranks of mojahedin.

Mojahedin Block Salang Highway

BK1208081891 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Text] In Afghanistan, mojahedin are reported to have blocked Salang Highway after capturing a strategic position near Qarah Bagh in the north of Kabul. The mojahedin also captured a sizable quantity of arms and ammunition during the attack. Twelve Kabul troops surrendered to the mojahedin.

Commentary on Government's Peace Efforts

LD1108045591 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Commentary by unidentified BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY political commentator]

[Text] As international media indicates, the national reconciliation policy of the Republic of Afghanistan, initiated by the Homeland Party led by esteemed Najibollah, chairman of the Homeland Party and president of the Republic of Afghanistan, has attracted the attention of all sociopolitical forces of Afghan society and international circles. They see that the only correct solution to the Afghanistan issue is the political channel and inter-Afghan dialogue, not the military channel. The best example for this is the five-point plan of the UN secretary general concerning the political solution of the Afghanistan issue.

The resolutions passed by the 44th session of UN General Assembly, the Nonaligned Movement, and other international circles, as well as national and political personalities, all accept the fact that the issue of Afghanistan must be solved by political dialogue. This is the very thought stemming from the proclamation of the national reconciliation policy initiated by the Homeland Party.

No Afghan can deny the fact that it is the leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan who took the first firm step on the path of peace and who took the process of peace, within the framework of the national reconciliation policy, to the highest level of its growth, despite all obstacles and hindrance by the warmongering extremists.

On the other hand, international society, neighboring countries, the United States, the political authorities of Pakistan, and some circles of the Afghan opposition have expressed support for a political solution to the issue of Afghanistan and regard this as the only way to end the war in the country. All peace-seeking initiatives for a peaceful solution of the Afghanistan issue so far have been made by the leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan, which has presented to the opposite side over 30 peace proposals. Diplomatic activities have forged ahead at the state level for the realization of the national reconciliation policy and inter-Afghan understanding, to which the statement of the UN secretary general refers.

The first positive response to the statement by the UN secretary general was also given by the leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan. The leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan has shown flexibility in all of these activities. The purpose of such flexibility is nothing but the restoration of peace and stability in the country. This patriotic stance of the Republic of Afghanistan prepared the ground for the leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan to receive high political prestige and authority at the national and international level. At the moment, the government of the Republic of Afghanistan is an organized administrative and political system consisting of three powers—executive, legislative, and judicial—enjoying national and international credibility. At present the leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Homeland Party as a whole serve to defend the interests of the majority of the people of Afghanistan.

In its own right, this forms a large section of Afghan society. The active participation of the Homeland Party and the leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan, and their role in the political solution of the Afghan problem, is not only necessary but are considered absolute factors for ensuring peace and for preventing war in the country. For instance, they have so far played their roles in the process of peace in Afghanistan and in defense of the country, independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the country. It is an open secret that the Afghan opposition has so far not been able to make the slightest proposal or plan for the restoration of peace in the country. They have continually rejected the peace proposals of the Republic of Afghanistan. Right now they do not have a unified stance as regards the UN secretary general's plan for a political solution of the Afghan issue. Some leaders of the opposition accept a section of the UN secretary general's plan, while others reject it and call it a conspiracy against their groups.

With the assistance of foreigners, the Afghan opposition has tried to appear on the international scene in the form of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, like so-called interim and transitional governments, hoping that they might acquire the support of other countries and of international forums. But developments show that not only has the opposition not obtained international support, but their closest friends did not officially recognize them. The opposition lost its credibility as they suffered from shameful defeats in military fields and lost international aid. But the leaders of the opposition have gained the reputation not of leaders of the Muslim mujahiddin, but of that of the most important drug producers and smugglers. Some of the leaders, such as Golboddin himself, declare that if they accede to power they will set up an Afghanistan- Pakistan confederation. In that case, Pakistan's citizens will not need a passport to travel to Afghanistan. Another group of the heads of the groups tried to propagate and promote among our Muslim people foreign ideas and other misdemeanors in return for money. This all reveals the real character of the Afghan opposition.

Saying so, it is very surprising that those elements, having such antinational and anti-Islamic characters, have spoken of the fact that the leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Homeland Party should not take part in intra-Afghan talks and in the future governments of Afghanistan. They do not know that the Homeland Party, presided over by Esteemed Najibollah, is the initiator of the national reconciliation policy. With its active participation have taken the process of peace to its present high level. Those who think that the Homeland Party should not have a place in intra-Afghan talks, in fact ignore an objective reality of Afghan society. They want to continue the war by negating another involved side in the Afghan problem.

President of Afghanistan Najibollah has a legal position because he has been appointed as president by the Loya Jerga of the Republic of Afghanistan in line with the constitution of the country. At the moment he is at the head of a stable and powerful political, administrative, and military system. A country's affairs are run in line with the existing laws of the country. Therefore, no one has the right to issue orders from foreign countries that the leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan should not have a place in issues concerning the fate of the Afghan people and their country.

The assistant U.S. State Secretary and Klaus Jacobi, minister of state for foreign affairs of Switzerland, have asserted that the state of the Republic of Afghanistan is a reality. No peace is possible in Afghanistan without taking this into account. Those who stubbornly ignore the peace-seeking role of the leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan will soon learn that they have remained very far from the objective realities of the Afghan society.

Bangladesh

Reportage on Minister Rahman Visit, Talks

Foreign Minister Leaves

BK1008020491 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0110 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Foreign Minister A.S.M. Mustafizur Rahman left Dhaka yesterday on a five-day visit to Iran and the United Arab Emirates. During his visit he will discuss bilateral, regional, and interntional issues of common concern with the foreign ministers of the two countries.

Prior to his departure, the foreign minister said his visit to Iran will help strengthen the friendly ties between Dhaka and Tehran. [Word indistinct] and export of manpower will also figure in the discussions. Mr. Mustafizur Rahman said various matters of bilateral interest, including exchange of expertise and export of manpower, will come up at the talks during his visit to the UAE.

Arrives in Tehran

BK1108021091 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0110 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] The foreign minister, Mr. Mustafizur Rahman, is now in Tehran on a three-day visit to Iran. During the visit he will hold discussions with the Iranian leaders on bilateral and international issues of common interest. Mr. Rahman told newsmen on his arrival in Tehran that Bangladesh is keen to cooperate in Iran's reconstruction program after 1988 Iran-Iraq war.

Proposes Common Market

BK1208050791 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0110 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Text] Bangladesh has proposed the creation of an Islamic common market to facilitate the exchange of goods and services for the benefit of the Muslim ummah. The proposal was made by Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman during talks with his Iranian counterpart in Tehran. Mr. Rahman said a reinsurance scheme under the auspices of ICO [Islamic Conference Organization] would protect business and assets of the Islamic countries.

Reciprocating the views of the Bangladesh foreign minister, Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati said his country is very interested in adopting all steps to improve relations with Islamic countries.

During the talks, Mr. Mustafizur Rahman said Bangladesh could help Iran in its reconstruction and development efforts by supplying skilled and semi-skilled manpower in manufacturing, construction, farming, animal husbandry, and fishing. He said the proposed air services agreement between the countries would pave the way for expansion of bilateral trade.

Reportage on BCCI Depositors, Hunger Strike

Government Moves To Help Depositors

BK1008051291 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0110 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] The government has decided to give interest-free advances to BCCI account holders to (?relieve) the depositors of their difficulties caused, due to the bank's closure. Finance Minister M. Saifur Rahman announced this at a news briefing in Dhaka yesterday. The minister said up to 50,000 taka will be extended to types of depositors against their balances in the BCCI accounts till the fourth of last month. The advance amount will be later adjusted with their respective accounts.

The BCCI operations in Bangladesh were closed on the 5th of last month at the directive of Bangladesh Bank. Mr. Saifur Rahman said the facility will especially benefit about 15,000 small depositors. Seventy to 80 crore taka will be needed to extend advances to the depositors. He said the step has been taken at the directive of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia for purely human considerations. The accounts which are entitled to interest-free advances are savings, current, and [words indistinct] and convertible foreign currency accounts. Bangladesh Bank has (?designated) the (Agrani) Bank to handle the advance payments of the BCCI account holders. The (Agrani) Bank will announce detailed analysis within the next two days. The advance will be paid through account payee crossed checks or pay order or draft. The disbursal advances will be made through designated braches of the (Agrani) Bank in Dhaka, Chittagong, and Khulna. The BCCI account holders will (?get advice) in prescribed form for the advance.

Depositors Call Off Hunger Strike

BK1008232391 Hong Kong AFP in English 1836 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Dhaka, Aug 10 (AFP)—Depositors in the collapsed Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) Saturday ended a hunger strike here following the Bangladeshi Government's decision to refund part or all of their money.

The BCCI Depositors' Association hailed Friday's decision to pay depositors "interest-free advances" equal to full amount of their accounts or 50,000 taka (1,388 U.S. dollars), whichever was the lower.

The association decided to call off the daily eight-hour hunger strike launched here Tuesday by some 30 depositors to demand the bank's reopening and said they would thank Prime Minister Khaleda Zia for her "bold step," group spokesman Kaiser Mohammad Quayum said.

Annoucing the deal with depositors Friday, Finance Minister Saifur Rahman said the plan would help 16,000 account holders recover all their money at a cost to the government of nearly 800 million tpka (22.2 million dollars).

Some 30,000 people had accounts in the four branches of BCCI in Bangladesh.

As BCCI was a foreign bank, the government and the Central Bangladesh Bank had no legal obligation to refund money, but the decision to do so was taken "purely on humanitarian grounds" by the prime minister, Rahman said.

Commission To Hold Referendum on Charter Bill

BK1008130091 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] In Bangladesh, Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed Saturday referred the Constitution 12th Amendment Bill to the Election Commission for conducting a referendum under the relevant article of the Constitution. The referendum is to ascertain whether or not the acting president should assent to the bill. The acting president has assented to the Constitution 11th Amendment Bill and the Referendum Bill 1991.

Zia Supported on Adopting Parliamentary System

BK1008155091 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Pakistani Premier Mohammad Nawaz Sharif has congratulated Prime Minister Khaleda Zia on the unanimous passage of the Constitution 12th Amendment Bill by the Parliament. In a message today, Mr. Nawaz Sharif said the government and the people of Pakistan are happy with the passage of the bill providing for switchover to parliamentary form of government from the existing presidential system. Mr. Sharif prayed for political stability and rapid economic progress of Bangladesh under Begum Zia's wise leadership.

India

Stalemate on Minister's Remarks on BJP Continues

BK0908133091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] The stalemate arising out of the remarks of Mr. Madhavrao Scindia continues even as the Lok Sabha began its normal proceedings today amidst a walkout by the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and its allies. The house met almost six minutes behind the scheduled 1100 sitting as informal consultations were going on in the speaker's chamber. Before the walkout, Mr. L.K. Advani said his party is not satisfied with the way out that emerged at this morning's consultations among leaders of various parties.

Talking to newsmen, Mr. L. K. Advani said the BJP parliamentary party will be meeting on Monday morning to decide the next course of action. He said at today's meeting the party decided to stay away from the proceedings of the Lok Sabha for the entire day. In reply to a question, Mr. Advani said it is for Mr. Scindia to make amends to his remarks against his party or the government has to come out with a statement which may assuage the aggrieved feelings of a large section of members in the house. He said on their own they will not put up any proposal. In reply to another question whether his party will take part in the election of the deputy speaker scheduled for Tuesday, Mr. Advani said there are many options, but the decision will be taken by the BJP parliamentary party on Monday.

Reportage on Killings,'Unrest' in Punjab

10 Killed; Ammunition Recovered

BK1008042491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0240 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Ten persons, including seven militants, have been killed in separate incidents in different parts of the state of Punjab since last night. A large quantity of automatic weapons and ammunition has been recovered from the possession of the killed militants.

25 Killed in Violence

BK1008233091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1823 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 10 (AFP)—Twenty-five people, including 16 militants, were killed in the northern state of Punjab late Friday and Saturday, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said.

The new deaths pushed up the toll in violence connected with the bloody campaign for an independent Sikh homeland in the border state so far this year to 3,000.

Security forces shot dead four militants in heir village in Punjab's frontier district of Amritsar late Saturday, state government officials were quoted as saying.

The other killings took place in a number of incidents across the state, the news agency said.

Seven 'Militants' Killed

BK1108051991 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0240 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] In Punjab, seven militants and one civilian have been killed and six policemen injured in separate incidents since last night. According to an official spokesman, four militants were killed and one SHO [station house officer] injured in an encounter near village (Harkiliar) in (Gharinta) area of Amritsar District. In Hoshiarpur District, two militants were killed and one policeman injured in an encounter near village (Tada) in Mahalpur area.

Two Policeman, 6 Militants Killed

BK1208040891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0240 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Text] In Punjab 11 persons, including two policemen and six militants, were killed in separate incidents last night. In Sangrur District the militants fired at a patrolling police party in Dariba police station and shot dead one constable and injured a head constable. In Ludhiana District a police party was attacked by some militants near Machchiwala. One head constable was killed and another policeman was seriously injured in the attack.

Negotiations for Oil Official's Release Continue

Threat To Kill Hostage Renewed

BK1108033091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1817 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 10 (AFP)—Moslem militants in Kashmir Saturday renewed a threat to kill an Indian Government company executive taken hostage 44 days ago, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said.

A caller claiming to represent the captors of K. Doraiswamy, 58, said on telephone that they would chop off the official's right hand unless their demands were met by the Government by 3 P.M. Monday.

They are demanding the release of seven more of their jailed colleagues, in addition to three freed earlier after the government established contacts with Doraiswamy's captors through mediators.

It was the "final extension of the deadline... (and) we will carry out the threat showing no respect for appeal from any quarter," PTI quoted the caller as telling reporters in Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital.

The captors from the underground Ikhwan-U-Musleen (Moslem brotherhood) had earlier threatened to kill Doraiswamy Monday, but later extended the deadline indefinitely.

They said the extension was in response to an appeal from the Pakistani chapter of the Muslimeen but the appeal was later withdrawn.

Doraiswamy was taken hostage by the Muslimeen, one of several Moslem militant groups fighting for the secession of Kashmir, while on an official visit to Kashmir June 28.

The three militants freed were part of a deal but the government has said the militants broke their side of the agreement.

Officials quoted by PTI from Srinsgar said, reacting to the renewed threat that "we would like a simultaneous exchange" of the hostage and the imprisoned militants.

However, the caller on the phone said there should be at least a gap of two hours after the militants were freed and before Doraiswamy's release. "We will never accept a simultaneous exchange."

The secessionist campaign in Kashmir, India's only Moslem- majority state, has cost more than 2,500 lives since 1990.

India accuses neighbouring Pakistan, which also claims Kashmir and controls the northern third of the region, of fanning the violence by training and arming Moslem militants. Pakistan denies direct investment.

UK's Kaufman Makes Appeal

BK1108093491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0240 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] The British Labor Party leader, Mr. Gerald Kaufman, has appealed to the kidnappers of the IOC [Indian Oil Corporation] official, Mr. Doraiswamy, to release him unharmed. Referring to the problem of militancy in Kashmir, he said that political issues should be settled through negotiations and not by violence. Speaking to newsmen in Srinagar yesterday, he said India and Pakistan should resolve the Kashmir issue bilaterally. Mr. Kaufman called on the state governor, Mr. G.C. Saxena, for the second time since his arrival in the state.

Agreement To Swap for Militants

BK1108150491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] The Jammu and Kashmir Government has reiterated its willingness to release five militants simultaneously in exchange for the Indian Oil Corporation executive director, Mr. Doraiswamy, and take followup action for the release of Javed Ahmed Shala on bail within 20 days as agreed upon. Reacting to a statement by a person claiming to be a representative of the abductors, an official spokesman said in Srinagar that the state government has agreed to release five of the seven militants named by the abductors. The spokesman made it clear that the substitution of Mushtaq Ahmed Khan in place of Mohammad Ashraf Bhatt is not feasible as he is involved in terrorist activities and offenses.

Meanwhile, security forces have arrested six Pakistan-trained militants and three suspected subversives during search operations in several areas of the Kashmir valley. Three AK-47 rifles, two pistols, nine hand grenades and a large quantity of ammunition were recovered from them.

UK's Kaufman on Relevance of Simla Agreement

BK1108093891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] The British Labor MP, Mr. Gerald Kaufman, today visited the camp of Kashmiri migrants near Jammu. He criticized the killing and kidnapping of innocent people in the Kashmir valley. Later, talking to our Jammu correspondent, Mr. Kaufman said the Simla Agreement is very much relavant to India-Pakistan relations as both countries have signed it.

Pakistan Cautioned on Raising Kashmir Issue

BK0908150191 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] India today cautioned Pakistan against diverting attention from critical bilateral issues by raising the Kashmir issue. A spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry said in New Delhi today that Pakistan's move to pass a resolution on Kashmir by the Islamic Conference Organization foreign ministers in Istanbul and its hue and cry over the presence of Israeli tourists in Kashmir only constituted red herring to India-Pakistan relations.

Commenting on newspaper reports on the proposed visit of the Pakistani foreign secretary, Mr. Shaharyar Khan, as a special envoy of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to India, he hoped that Mr. Khan will bring realistic and specific suggestions for resolving bilateral problems. He however said that no details are available on what is sought to be conveyed through the special envoy. He said India welcomes the visit as it had always been willing to have discussions with Pakistan.

Pakistan Accused of Airspace Violation

BK1008125291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1111 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Srinagar, India, Aug 10 (AFP)—A Pakistani helicopter gunship violated Indian airspace twice over the border town of Poonch in Kashmir, Indian defence officials said here Saturday.

The violations Friday near the line of control which divides areas of Kashmir administered by the two countries prompted Indian commanders to protest to their Pakistani counterparts, the officials said.

The helicopter penetrated about 10 kilometres (six miles) into Indian airspace during its two sorties, hovering briefly over strategic army installations, and returned as Indian officers sounded an alert, they said. It was the 15th reported violation of Indian airspace over Kashmir by Pakistani aircraft this year.

Control of Kashmir is the subject of a longstanding dispute between India and Pakistan, and has caused two of the three wars between the countries.

Army soldiers were enforcing an indefinite curfew in Poonch on Saturday after violence the previous day during a demonstration against unemployment, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) reported.

One woman was killed and 15 policemen were injured in violence sparked by rock-throwing demonstrators demanding government jobs, PTI said. The protestors also tried to set fire to government buildings, prompting police to open fire, killing the woman and injuring three other demonstrators.

Minister Comments on Pakistan, China , S. Africa

BK1208072291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0630 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Text] The external affairs minister says it is in the interest of the people of India and Pakistan to resolve bilateral problems within the framework of the Simla agreement. In an interview to the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation, Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki said New Delhi is sincerely committed to this stand. The external affairs minister, who concluded his three-day visit to Mauritius on Saturday, also expressed the hope that Pakistan will reciprocate the gesture and stop assisting terrorism in the border states.

On South Africa, Mr. Solanki said the process of dismantling apartheid has not yet reached an irreversible stage. He, however, hoped that immediate steps will be taken for the creation of a unitary, nonracial, and democratic South Africa. He welcomed the changes introduced by President De Klerk by repealing the apartheid legislation.

On Sino-India relations, Mr. Solanki said New Delhi wants to strengthen the existing relations and broaden the areas of cooperation. All outstanding issues should be resolved through negotiations in an atmosphere of mutual trust.

Mr. Solanki asserted that India desires friendly relations with all its neighbors and wants to solve all bilateral problems through negotiations. The external affairs minister pointed out that the recent political changes in the world have vindicated the stand of the Nonaligned Movement. In the changed situation, the movement has to continue to pursue its objectives to secure peace, disarmament, and equitable development, he added.

Depositors Ask Central Bank for Interim Relief

BK1108080591 Hong Kong AFP in English 0808 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 11 (AFP)—Indians with deposits in the collapsed Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) have asked the central bank for relief money in the interim before a final settlement.

The 7,000-odd depositors in the BCCI's Bombay branch met at a cricket stadium in the Western city on the weekend and mulled plans to go to court for relief of 30,000 rupees each, PRESS TRUST OF INDIA said.

They also plan to lobby in parliament and with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for a "speedy solution," it said.

M.R. Pai, president of the All India Bank Depositors' Association, said there was no cause for panic because BCCI assets in Bombay were larger than its liabilities.

Deposits in the branch, said to be the fourth largest profit- maker in the BCCI's network, totalled 3.8 billion rupees . Its assets were estimated at 5.2 billion rupees .

But many depositors, mostly expatriates in the Gulf, have their life's savings stuck in the branch which closed July 5 and are facing a sorry plight, PTI said.

Depositors include the Bombay Cricket Association which had five million rupees in the BCCI and is now in "dire straits," PTI said.

The RBI moved quickly to take the BCCI into liquidation and appointed the State Bank of India as provisional liquidator, preventing the outflow of funds from the Bombay branch to pay for the bank's liabilities elsewhere.

Government To Sell Reactors to Third World

BK1208075291 Hong Kong AFP in English 0740 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Text] Bombay, India, Aug 12 (AFP)—India plans to sell nuclear reactors for research purposes to developing nations as part of New Delhi's bid to shore up the country's depleted foreign exchange reserves, reports said Monday.

The state-controlled Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) has developed the design for five-megawatt reactors and will sell the technology to Third World countries planning to launch basic research programmes, officials said here.

The reactors, which can produce isotopes, will be sold to countries that "strictly" adhere to the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) safety standards, BARC Reactors Group Director S. Mehta said.

"India is prepared to sell technology abroad in areas like nuclear reactor engineering, isotope and radiation technology, radiological safety and protection, electronics and instrumentation and other spin-offs from basic and applied sciences," he said.

Mehta did not disclose the names of countries to which BARC plans to sell its five-megawatt reactors or their cost.

BARC has denied reports that the small research reactors could be used for military purposes.

Mehta said BARC had already expressed its plans during an IAEA conference in Geneva last September and added that he did not foresee problems, noting that Argentina had recently sold a nuclear research reactor to Turkey.

India, like Argentina, is a non-signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), terming it discriminatory.

New Delhi has also rejected Pakistan's June proposal for a five- nation meeting on the NPT in South Asia, calling it a propaganda ploy by Islamabad.

Meanwhile another BARC official said the Bombay-based centre had at the IAEA conference also offered its services to countries that needed fuel reprocessing facilities.

"The offer was for spent fuel from research reactors, of which there are about 125 in the world," he said, adding that India, Germany, Italy, Japan and Spain were the only nations without atomic weapons possessing such facilities.

India has two nuclear fuel reprocessing plants near Bombay and a third is coming up in the southern state of Tamil Nadu.

New Delhi's plan to sell nuclear research technology and fuel reprocessing facilities is seen here as an effort by the country's Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) to earn much-needed foreign exchange, observers said.

India, which exploded an atomic device in 1974, has invested tens of thousands of dollars [as received] in its ambitious nuclear programme, setting up its first nuclear plant in 1969 on the outskirts of this populous city.

It has so far installed seven nuclear power plants with a daily generation capacity of more [than] 2,000 megawatts, meeting 2.5 percent of the country's electricity demands.

New Delhi has approved more than one billion dollars for the AEC to build six 500-megawatt and four 235-megawatt reactors to help boost India's total atomic power output to 10,000 megawatts by the year 2000.

The Department of Atomic Energy's total budgetary allocation for fiscal 1991-1992 is about 665 million dollars, up by about 25 million dollars from the previous financial year.

Three Gandhi Murder Suspects Arrested

BK1208012491 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] In Tamil Nadu three Sri Lankan nationals closely associated with Sivarasan, the prime [suspect] accused in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, were last night arrested by the police at Tiruchirappalli. The superintendent of police told newsmen today that the three persons, who hailed from Valvedditturai, have been staying in the town for the past two years. The arrested persons are all in-laws of Sivarasan and provided shelter and help to him.

Iran

Interior Minister Returns From Damascus Visit

LD1108190591 Tehran IRNA in English 1632 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 11, IRNA—Interior Minister Hojjat ol- Eslam 'Abdollah Nuri, back from a week-long visit to Damascus Sunday, said Syria has not backed down from its stance on Palestine and against the Zionist regime.

Nuri said Syria has not given up the cause for which it has struggled for ten years and it was still treading the same path.

On reasons for Syria's acceptance of a U.S. proposed peace plan, Nuri quoted Syrian officials as reasoning that since Syria has so far been portrayed as a warmonger and Israel as a peace lover they wanted to strip them of this weapon.

"What I understood during the visit is that Syria is still sticking to its stance towards Palestine and the Zionist regime," he said.

While in Damascus, Nuri submitted President Hafiz al-Asad a message from his Iranian counterpart Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi- Rafsanjani in which he inquired about Syria's stance on the Middle East peace conference.

The interior minister said he was carrying President al-Asad's detailed response to President Rafsanjani's letter.

He made it clear that based on its principles the Islamic Republic will never back away from its policy of not recognizing the Zionist regime. He said the Islamic Republic would follow the regional issues and the goals the U.S. was seeking in the region, anxiously and carefully.

Asked about the timing of the visit to Damascus and the release of two British and American hostages from Lebanon, he replied: "My visit had no connection with the hostages."

Among other topics discussed in Damascus were the repatriation of fugitives by both countries, anti-drug campaign and the issues of Iranian tourists travelling to Syria, he concluded.

Views Syria's Stance, 'New Phase'

LD1108230991 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] The agreement on implementing the Tehran accord of 1369 [year beginning 21 March 1990] has been signed by the interior ministers of Iran and Syria in Damascus.

Interior Minister Nuri, who has just visited Syria at the head of a delegation, announced this on his return to Tehran on Sunday afternoon. He said: During this trip, discussions were held on the provision of better information on the state of Iran and Syria's law enforcement forces; the exchange of information about combating narcotics and other offenses; the extradition of offenders; facilities for Iranian pilgrims to Syria and Syrian nationals in Iran; and consular issues, in accordance with the agreement.

The interior minister said, in connection with his meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria: I delivered the written message from our president to Mr. Hafiz al-Asad.

Mr. Nuri pointed to the unchanging stance of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the nonrecognition of the illegitimate existence of the regime occupying Jerusalem. On Syria's stance, he said:

[Begin Nuri recording] Naturally, it was necessary for us to know more about the position of the Arab Republic of Syria, although we believed and still believe that Syria will never abandon the principles it has stood for. It has struggled for decades along a certain path and has been able to remain a revolutionary country, losing, along this path, many martyrs to the cause of the Palestine revolution. We believe that Syria will certainly follow the same path and will not surrender to pressures. All in all, this is what I gathered from this trip—that is, that the Arab Republic of Syria is standing steadfast behind its principles. [end recording]

Mr. Nuri noted: Our Syrian brothers thought that as a result of events currently in process in the region the impression is given that we are the warmongers and the Israeli regime—which is an aggressor and occupying regime—is portrayed as a peace-seeking regime. We want to take away this weapon from the hands of our enemies.

In continuation of this interview, the interior minister added: Syria is pursuing its stance with regard to the issue of Palestine and Syrian officials are treating the events that are presently unfolding as a conflict and dispute on a new front. The Syrian brothers indicated that we are now going through a new phase in the struggle and that therefore should, with all our strength, be able to achieve good results—through good moves—for ourselves, for Islamic countries, and for Palestine.

Habibi Views Syria's Peace Conference Stance

LD1208111991 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Excerpts] As you heard earlier, Mr. Habibi, the first vice president, took part in a news conference this morning in which he reported on the cabinet's meetings during the past week and answered questions from reporters. Let me draw your attention to a report about the news conference.

Mr. Habibi mentioned the financial activities of the government; the situation of nonoil exports during the current year; the foreign minister's report about the recent meeting of the foreign ministers of Islamic Conference Organization member countries; the transport minister's report about increased road and transport capacity; the Budget and Planning Organization's report about the population census project planned for the period from 20th Shahrivar to 11th Mehr [11 September to 3 October]; and discussions about economic adjustments as the main topics raised during the cabinet's past two meetings. [passage omitted]

About a Middle East peace conference and Syria's position, the first vice-president said: That country believes that until now the Israelis were pretending that the Arabs involved were not prepared to hold talks and that the blame for the continuing conflict lay on them. As a result of the stance recently adopted by Damascus, however, Israel's aggressive stance has become more obvious.

In connection with the recent remarks of U.S. officials to the effect that Saddam Husayn is no longer considered to be a threat to them, he said: The future of Iraq depends on the extent to which the regime ruling that country can fulfill the wishes of the big powers, and there is no doubt that when the Iraqi Government acts in line with their wishes, it is not considered to be a threat by them.

Mr. Habibi said about the issue of hostages in Lebanon: We are opposed to hostage taking and its continuation, and we will not spare any effort for the release of the hostages. However, we expect the world to regard the issue in a consistent fashion with other countries doing what they can to obtain the release of our hostages. In connection with the clarification of the fate of Iranian hostages in Lebanon, he said: The Foreign Ministry is currently pursuing this matter.

Habibi Calls for Release of All Hostages

LD1208100191 Tehran IRNA in English 0856 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 12, IRNA—First Vice President Hasan Habibi Monday pointed to the release of some Western captives in Lebanon over the past few days, and underscored that as has emphatically been stressed "Iran opposes any hostage-taking."

Briefing reporters at his weekly press conference, Habibi noted that Iran would contine to use what "is being interpreted as influence" for the release of all Westerners in Lebanon.

He reiterated that the issue of all hostages, whether Western, Lebanese, Palestinian or Iranians, should be solved.

"Some hostages have been released on the basis of negotiations held and the Foreign Ministry is active for the release of Iranian hostages," the first vice president said.

Elsewhere in his speech, Habibi put non-oil revenues for the first quarter of the current calendar year (started March 21) at 464 million dollars and noted that the figure would rise to 2 billion dollars by the end of the year.

"The government puts emphasis on the full implementation of the first (five-year) economic plan and, to this end, all bottlenecks should be removed," he added.

Habibi said that according to the 5-year plan, some of the projects, including dam building and petrochemicals, would be carried out with collaboration from foreign companies.

He also noted that the Iranian private sector would also cooperate with foreign companies where necessary.

On the financial performance of the government in the first quarter of the current year, the first vice president called it "outstanding and satisfactory" and noted that in some cases it was ahead of what had been stipulated in the year's budget. He said the anticipated tax and oil revenues would be materialized by the end of the year.

As for raising the salaries of government employees, Habibi said a bill has been presented to the Majlis in this connection, and efforts were being made to bring the bill in the list of Majlis priorities.

He added that efforts were also under way that in case of changes in prices, government employees would not be affected and that they would be paid subsidies, directly or indirectly.

Habibi also pointed to the next nationwide population census which he said is due to be carried out from September 11 to October 3.

UK's Major Thanks Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Release

LD1108101191 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] In the wake of the release of John McCarthy, the British hostage held in Lebanon, British Prime Minister John Major in a message addressed to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran Government for its humanitarian efforts toward realizing McCarthy's release. Part of the message reads: The British Government likewise stresses the need for the release of all hostages, wherever they may be held captive.

In the same connection, British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd in a message sent to Foreign Minister Velayati thanked him for humanitarian efforts toward the release of this hostage. In part of the message, the British foreign secretary expressed the hope that he will be able to keep in touch with our country's foreign minister, in respect to the release of all hostages and also with regard to other important regional and international matters.

Papers Urge Release of 'All Hostages' in Lebanon

LD1208090691 Tehran IRNA in English 0800 GMT 12 Aug 91

["Hostage Ball in U.S.-Zionist Court, Say Dailies"—IRNA headline]

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 12, IRNA—Two Iranian dailies Monday commenting on the recent release of Western captives in Beirut called for emancipation of all hostages including Iranian, Palestinian and Lebanese kidnapped by the U.S.-supported Phalangist Christians and the Zionist state.

The Persian daily 'ABRAR' said the release of Westerners over the past few days in Lebanon was indicative of the good intentions of a people who for years have been oppressed by the West and its allies. "This proves the fact that regional Muslims favour peace and friendship," it said and asked if their gesture will evoke proper response.

The editorial noted U.S. President George Bush's praise for Syria and Iran for helping trace out the missing Westerners, but reiterated that mere words were not enough for Iranian, Lebanese and Palestinian families whose beloved ones are hostages of the Zionists and their Western collaborators in Lebanon.

"Such expression of gratitude will not change anything if not followed by the release of Palestinian and Lebanese hostages and by disclosure of information on the fate of Iranians kidnapped by the Phalangists," said ABRAR.

Iran, the prime target of hostage-taking in Lebanon, is yet to hear a word about its four nationals who despite diplomatic immunity were kidnapped by the Christian Phalangists way back in July 1982.

As its gesture of goodwill, the Revolutionary Justice Organisation (RJO) of Lebanon last Thursday set free British captive John McCarthy and followed it up yesterday with the release of American captive Edward Austin Tracy.

However, it has made clear that it expects reciprocity on the part of the West and its Zionist clients, who are holding hostage several hundred Lebanese and Palestinian Muslims including the prominent Lebanese cleric Shaykh Karim 'Ubayd.

The English-language daily "KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL" termed as a "turning point" the mediation efforts the U.N. secretary-general is to undertake to solve the hostage dilemma.

It said the Sunday release of a second Western captive "is a clear proof to this fact that the Lebanese and Palestinians no longer want to further prolong the hostage crisis and they only want the fulfilment of their legitimate demand, that is the emancipation of some 400 relatives and colleagues taken prisoner by the Israelis."

It noted that for the past few years, the West and its media horns have exploited the case of the missing Westerners "to create a negative icon in the world public opinion about Iran, despite the fact that the first hostages in Lebanon were four Iranians," abducted three years prior to the disappearance of the first Westerner in Lebanon.

"While hopes are growing for a final solution to the hostage drama, (UN chief) Mr. Perez de Cuellar must do his best to secure the release of Iranian hostages," said the daily.

Stressing that no evidence exists on the supposed assassination of the Iranian hostages, KAYHAN made it clear that "at the end of the hostage drama the fate of the first victims of the hostage crisis in Lebanon should not be forgotten."

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Gives Friday Prayers Sermon

LD0908133391 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Friday prayers sermon by President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani at Tehran University on 9 August—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the magnificent, the merciful. [passage omitted] Today, my discussion in both sermons concerns the issues of the day. I will devote my first sermon to internal issues; my second sermon will be on world and regional problems. The first sermon will be rather long, but I shall keep the second sermon brief so that our great people are not bothered too much with the heat.

Our cabinet has now served for three years. We are on the eve of Government Week devoted to the martyrdom of martyr Raja'i and martyr Bahonar. The first sermon will be a summary of the current situation of the country. The second sermon concerns world issues. This summary will be open and clear. Issues will be discussed that have not been openly mentioned for various reasons during the post-war period. I think that the current conditions of the world and the issues facing the region—the mischief that we will face in the future due to world power being concentrated in one pole—call for explanations, which are political and social necessities.

My summary is this: Fortunately, your revolution and the conditions of your society are in the best possible situation. The trend is very desirable and acceptable. I think that this issue is understandable even for those who are not acquainted with statistics.

After the war, after the cease-fire, we started a complete analysis of the situation of our society based on the orders and guidelines of the imam. It was led by the then president and the current dear leader [Khamene'i]. Its outcome was the formulation of policies, which were signed and approved by the Imam. I will describe the situation of the country after the cease-fire and the policies and programs based on that analysis.

In those days I was in the Majles. Our country was strengthened spiritually by the war even though it was damaged materially. Revolutionary fervor, self-sacrifice, devotion, and paying attention to spiritual matters and Islamic and revolutionary culture were interwoven with our people throughout the eight years of war. Therefore, we did not have any internal social difficulties from the spiritual, ethical, or cultural spheres. Our analysis was this: Our great task was to maintain this spirit, this achievement of the war.

Concerning the material and economic side, our country faced very serious difficulties. I cannot yet talk about all those problems; history will speak of the other parts. One of the factors in accepting the cease-fire was this very same issue of material and economic difficulties. We did not mention this then and have not done so to this day: There was a letter that our economics minister and the country's economic affairs officials wrote, which was brought up in the Cabinet. It was handed to the Imam and to me, as I was the commander of the war. We analyzed the letter. They announced that the country's budget and economic potential, its income and expenditure was in the red. Society could not take this anymore. That letter exists. It may be OK to publish it now. In those days, it could not be mentioned. The governor of the Central Bank of the time wrote a letter announcing: Although we do not receive credit and we do not borrow from abroad, we owe around 12 billion dollars in foreign exchange debts.

I will tell you the important economic difficulties faced by us after the war—of course, this is a source of pride for us. You remember that during the war, arrogance supported Iraq with money and weapons. Everyone was pressuring us with economic blockade, not paying back our assets, and the other pressures which you are aware of. We fought blasphemy and global arrogance alone—whether from the East or the West. We were oppressed and fought for eight long years using our own resources. We defended ourselves during and after the war.

What followed after the war came to an end, however, is of real importance. Despite all the help they received the Iraqis were brought to their knees after the war. During the war they regularly received aid and so they were saved; but after the war when the aid was cut off, Iraq's heavy borrowings—some $70 to 80 billion in loans imposed on it—in fact, Iraq itself was responsibile for bringing such imposition on itself—forced it to launch that aggression against Kuwait, hoping thereby to create a new climate for its people's living standards.

But rather than following that route the Islamic Republic adopted another route, although its difficulties were greater than those of Iraq. That is a route I will explain: It incorporated very basic policies that were drafted then and were approved by the imam. So the Islamic Republic adoped the correct path rather than following the route adopted by Iraq.

Now, what were the problems, which we summarized at that time? First, around $1 trillion damages inflicted through the war. That amount is no exaggeration; in fact, the figures have been prepared in such a way as to enable us to defend them at the United Nations. [passage omitted]

Now, please think how long it would take to earn $1 trillion. At that time, in the year 67 [year ending March 20, 1989], our oil income was less than $10 billion a year. It means that we would need 100 years to earn that much money. But now that our annual income from oil amounts to $17-18 billion, even so we need 50-60 years on the basis of our existing oil income to make up for that loss.

So much for the first point. As to the second one, it is the regime's debt commitments to others. I have already said that our external debts amount to 12 billion [currency not specified] which comprise purchases on credit and commitment to pay letters of credit opened by the banks. Then there is borrowing from the Central Bank. During the war while Iraq was borrowing from abroad, we financed our expenses through loans from the Central Bank. Budget deficits piled up year after year until the total sum added up to a shocking figure. [passage omitted]

The third problem concerns the responsibility the regime had to shoulder with regard to combatants and the families of those who suffered losses through the war. These people consisted of a large number of martyrs and their families, so many POWs and their families, so many disabled and their families, and so many combatants, who had lived the best years of their life on the front line and thereby missed out on education and trade. [passage omitted] So this is the third point and it places a heavy commitment on the shoulders of the regime.

The fourth point concerns half-finished projects piling up on the government's hands. Perhaps that is the most painful of all pains and yet nobody feels it. We made a calculation: We saw half-finished projects valued at around 500 billion tomans that remain on our hands. [passage omitted]

What does it mean when I say that projects have been delayed? This is what I mean. For instance, the Mobarakeh steel mill was one of our projects. Its products would have been available to society, many programs would have been implemented, and many difficulties would have been removed if that project had been completed in its proper time. This concerns steel plates, nearly 2.4 million tonnes of steel plates. At the moment, our consumption, our industrial consumption of steel plates is much less than that, from the plates used for roofing to bus bodies or the bodies of heavy industries [as heard]. This is what results from the delay—that in those days its cost was about 30 billion toman, but now it is about 80 billion. This delay nearly trebbled the cost. [passage omitted]

We had 500 billion tomans worth of such projects. For instance, the Imam Khomeyni Port petrochemical complex, Bushehr power generator, Shahid Raja'i generator, Mazandaran lumber and paper mill, and Bafq-Bandar-e 'Abbas railway. These were some of the big ones; there were many smaller ones such as Zanjan copper and lead plant and many others which were all vital for the country. They were projects, which were part of our lives' necessities, and they are left unfinished. This was the fourth problem.

Our fifth problem was our underdevelopment in infrastructure. This placed a very, very difficult and unbearable burden on the shoulders of you, the people. We do not need to explain this too much. You understand this yourselves. This means the roads which we did not build, the railways which we did not build, power generators which we did not build, refineries which we did not build, bridges which we did not build, schools which we did not build, universities which we did not build, ports which we did not build, and means of transportation which we did not purchase. [passage omitted]

The sixth problem was the condition of the country's municipalities. There are about 500 cities in your country, and during the war these cities were not able to modernize themselves—their streets, their squares, their parks, their water and electricity. [passage omitted] This was the fifth [as heard] problem.

Our next problem which was more difficult than the above and was probably the mother of all the problems: the reduction in production. During the eight years of the war production had shown a drastic reduction. During the first two years after the revolution we did not succeed in organizing our production—management was disrupted, many managers fled, there were confiscations, factories were left without owners until we found owners for them and organized them, the factory owners had taken their capital and everything was disrupted. Meanwhile, the war started. As a result, the fall in production during the past ten years emptied people's pockets.

I will only give you one figure so that you can see what the failure in production means. The gross national product [GNP] is one of the major indices of the economic performance of a country, showing that this has been the level of national production. Before the revolution the situation was not very satisfactory either, but after the revolution up to now this is what has happened to us: The GNP situation was such that if before the war and before the revolution an individual Iranian's share of the GNP was, say, 40,000 tomans, in the year 67 [beginning 21 March 1988] when we discussed the plan it was 20,000 tomans. You certainly understand the meaning of this. There were two reasons for it: One was due to reduction in production, the other was the increase in the population. They add up all the national products, including agriculture, industry, etc, divide it by the number of the population and call it income per capita. Our income per capita in the year 67 was 23,000 rials, while earlier on at the highest point it had been about 40,000. That means we only had about 53 or 54 percent.

In other words, during the war each Iranian had become 50 percent poorer. This is true poverty. Other things one does not notice. Whatever the condition of the house, the carpets, or the food, each person can put up with them and in economic yardsticks they have their own problems; but true poverty for the national economy and for the people is the reduction in national products.

So much for the sixth calamity we encountered, which was a very important point.

Our seventh problem was that of employment and job conditions and the like. Well, there was a country in which there was no production and in which investment had taken a nosedive—the private sector did not make any serious investment while the government lacked resources to make any investment. Therefore, there was unemployment. And the problem of unemployment is a dangerous malaise manifesting its implications in other ways. It gives rise to wheeling and dealing with all its ill effects. [passage omitted]

Anyway, that is a serious problem—I do not know whether it is the seventh or the eighth problem. Add to it the ninth problem, which is the problem of over-administration. We were afflicted by a back-breaking administrative centralization, which was necessitated by the war time conditions. There were such imperatives as rationing of goods and introduction of import-export monopoly which necessitated a free hand for the government everywhere in the economic life of the country. Then, in an effort to ensure that government employees were not corrupted, we had to constantly enact laws, regulations, and rules. We have introduced so many laws on preserving the system of over-centralization that today when we want to amend something we are faced with a mountain of rules and regulations. [passage omitted]

That was the ninth problem. Another important problem we continue to encounter, which we have not yet managed to solve—in some quarters we still have it—is the run-down condition of our industrial plants. The industrial plants now on stream are those that were acquired during the years between 50 and 60 [the 1970's]. Now these run-down plants have been left on our hands. These are worn out plants, antiquated, and unable to compete with new plants in the world. It is also not possible to get spare parts, which keeps the plant from achieving suitable returns. Plus, they have no sustained access to raw materials. Nobody takes the risk of running a plant and employing a work force only to face uncertainty in getting raw materials. [passage omitted]

The 11th point is the problem of our people's serious dependence on government subsidies and government expenditure. The main part of the people's livelihood—their bread, meat, sugar, tea, vegetable fats and all those items that, as you know, are rationed—are all subsidized. Nowhere in the world can such a system be seen. No country, not even the Communists, had such a system. But since we were isolated during the war and had to rely on our own resources, we had to devise something to look after the people and we did so through rationing. [passage omitted] This is a problem we still face that has no easy solution. One cannot suddenly eliminate subsidies on people's bread and other necessities; we have not done so. We will look at it when we come to our reform plans.

The 12th problem was the extreme deprivation in the deprived regions of our country. This made our hearts bleed. One of our wishes during the revolution was to see to the deprived, to reduce the differences. Nearly 50 percent of our society is deprived, that is, they do not benefit from the standards in the cities such as water, electricity, education, health, roads, and employment. This chronic pain remains from the time of the shah. We had hoped to remedy this, we had promised the people, but we could not see to the deprived regions during the war even though all the efforts of the Cabinet and the Majles were to provide for those regions. However, that amount was not going to make them rich.

Our 12th problem was the neither war nor peace situation at the front. The enemy was on our soil. We had to maintain our forces, pay for the war, pay the allowances, provide ammunition, and so on. In any case, we bore the brunt of the war. Psychologically, our POW's [prisoners of war] were being tortured in Iraq, families were anxious. This was a great burden on the state's shoulders.

Our 13th difficulty was the continuation of the economic blockade. Despite all claims, the blockade continued and it still does. Nobody has helped us. They did not pay our dues. Those who should have bought oil from us did not. We continued to have approximately the same wartime blockade; we still do. Just look at the Bushehr nuclear power station. We have already invested 85 percent of the total; Germany is not prepared to complete its side of the bargain; the United States is still not prepared to give our money back; France has still not paid us back; Japan was not prepared to complete the petrochemical plant—it was 90 percent completed. These are our serious documents pertaining to the blockade against us.

On top of all these, we had natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods. We also had the Iraqi refugees. We could not have forecast these factors then. This was a summary of the economic difficulties of our country at the time. In 1367 [year beginning 21 March 1989], when the war had finished, we saw that the difficulties were getting worse. So the situation got worse because the people started to demand more, but state earnings could not meet them, just like a pain that one does not feel when the wound is fresh, but as time goes by, one can feel it.

We started feeling this pain toward the end of 1367. You can see its effects today. We had the greatest budget deficit in 1367. In previous years, the situation was better. In 1367, our budget deficit was equal to half the budget figure itself. Over 50 percent, 50.1 percent was our budget deficit. We had spent 400 billion tomans, around 200... [corrects himself], 100 billion was borrowed from the bank. This was due to the few months difficulties after the war. This was our inflation. I have already told you our GDP. The performance of the development budget compared with that of the current budget is miserable. In 1367, our expenditure amounted to around 300 billion tomans—of course, the budget figure was higher than that, but I am giving the figure at constant prices, otherwise the actual figure was higher—we spent around 300 billion tomans—30 billion tomans [as heard]. However, our current budget amounted to that huge figure, which was around five and a half times over the development budget. This is a catastrophe. If a country that is in the middle of reconstruction is faced with such a situation, that country is on the verge of bankruptcy, that is, it has nothing. This means: Stop implementing the proposals, nothing goes forward, there is no progress. This was our situation.

Considering the country's situation, we formulated certain policies: to find new sources of income, ways of increasing income from existing sources. These policies became a program, the program went to the Majles, it was approved and passed to the Cabinet. It reached the government toward the end of 1368 and we started implementing it. As your trustee, I say this: Despite all the difficulties, despite the extremely bad view, under the shadow of the program and the good performance by your country's authorities, all the economic indices are getting better. Let me tell you something: We have started on the correct path, really, to take this country from one stricken by war to a balanced country. [crowd chants support]

The meaning of the plan is that the government and the Majles sat down and investigated, set aside a portion of national funds for any of these difficulties, and proposed a solution. If anyone thinks that all of these difficulties I have referred to will be solved in one year, two years, or three years, such a person would be very ignorant to think like that. Such a person would be totally ignorant and economically illiterate, and could only hope for a miracle. It is clear to all of us who are involved in economic affairs that a correct movement has begun. We have programs for all the 10 or 15 cases I referred to and we are doing well on all fronts. Some of these are also clear to you.

In our foreign policy we have moved toward solving the difficulties that were imposed on us. You now see that our position in the world is much better than two years ago, without having sacrificed our ideals in the slightest or having compromised our principles. You have heard about our new stands in the Islamic Conference. You have heard about our stand on the new world order. You know our stand regarding the issue of Palestine. You saw our stand on the dangerous Persian Gulf War, which we left behind. Our position is quite clear in dealing with international affairs. Despite the fact that, unfortunately, some demoralizing remarks have been made by some ignorant or not so ignorant individuals, we have been able to solve the problem of our presence in international organizations, where it is necessary, and we have solved it.

You can also see the condition of the country in comparison with our neighbors. I do not wish to mention the names of other countries. Go to those countries and stay there for awhile—not with the 7 toman government rate of exchange, which is almost free, but with the real exchange rate. Go and see the differences in the living standards there and here.

All the indices point upward. We have devoted a heavy volume of our capabilities to our universities and schools, because they are mother organizations and they should provide human resources. However, this gradually will be done. One of the major problems we had was the issue of production and we thought that we should put that right. If there is no production, the campaign against inflation, against poverty, against smuggling, against multiplicity of prices—none of them will be effective.

You remember that during the former government, once we—the heads of the three powers—went to the imam, asked for his permission, and passed a law on the basis of his permission which empowered the government to act both as the government, as the Majlis, and as the judge, meaning that it could legislate laws on penalties [ta'zirat]—to implement them, and to act as the judge as well. We also gave the same rights to all the governor generals, the governorates, and the municipalities as well. In fact, all the three powers were concentrated in every city. The aim was to fight against inflation during the war, against the evils of profiteering, hoarding and so on. The result was that in that year our inflation was reduced from 30 percent to about 28 percent, or something like that. It produced only a very trivial improvement, despite all the pressure and force that we exerted. That was not the government's fault. It was something that was carried out by the imam and by us, but was an unsuccessful experiment. However, it was necessary during the war and had to be done.

We discovered that the improvement in economic affairs requires a move from production to administrative reforms. We have started that. We are successful in production. The index was constantly going down with the exception of one or two years. This meant that despite the fact that production was falling every year, since 68 [year beginnning 21 March 1989] it has started moving upwards. In the year 68—and we started the plan toward the end of the year 67... [corrects himself] the year 68—we had 4 percent growth in production; in the year 69 we had 10.1 percent. This figure is higher than the one envisaged in the plan. The plan only called for 8 percent. This shows that the plan is being implemented well.

There are many administrative reforms. Those who are dealing with the customs, with the Bank Markazi, with exports, with borders—they all can see how much easier are the works dealing with imports and exports. Of course, they have not yet reached a satisfactory level. We are doing our work. This is a lengthy work and cannot be solved by resorting to surgery. We should do all these things gradually.

With regard to inflation, we never promised that we could get rid of inflation. We said we would control it. In the plan the aim is the control of inflation. It has been specified that each year it should be reduced by so much until it reaches a satisfactory level. It means that each year you will purchase things at a higher price than the previous year. This is according to the plan. It is possible that some commodities may become cheaper, but some of them will become more expensive. I saw something about the rate of inflation. Let me read it to you now so that you can see what has been the rate of inflation since the year 53 [year beginning 21 March 1974]. I have written it on a piece of paper. I will read it to you. These are the official figures of the country.

Inflation intensified in 1974 when our oil prices climbed suddenly and gave rise to those specific problems. [passage omitted] In 1988, inflation stood at 28.9 percent. This was the last year of the period preceding the five-year plan. Inflation began its downward trend when the plan began to be implemented. In 1989 it fell to 17.4 percent. This means that it fell by about 10-11 percent, and last year, that is, 1990, it went down to 9 percent—at the retail level. Retail trade has other characteristics, and pertains to another discussion. But you see how this was a move advocated by the plan, and we moved well ahead of the planned targets due to the vast amount of foreign exchange we injected in the industrial and production sectors.

You will ask: How is it that some things have become so much more expensive. We accept this. But then, many things have also become cheaper. For instance, steel and its by-products have become much cheaper; the price of lead and zinc has come down a lot; plastic, paint, and many things with which we saturated the market have decreased. We were not able to do this with some other products and so the prices of these have increased. Last year [ending 20 March 1991] we had 9 percent inflation, and this is a great success. You may ask: How? I will tell you how. We cannot give you the production figures now—we have produced thousands of articles. I did have one figure in my files—having just received it from Mr Nezhad-Hoseynian, who sent it in relation to his own work. I will read you this so that you may see what has happened to production in your country during these nine heavy years.

Buses: in 1989 we produced 279. In 1990 we met with some difficulties and production fell to 47 but this year [starting 21 March 1991] we have produced 917. [passage omitted] Trucks: in the first quarter of 1989 we produced 1,236; the next year, 1,106, and this year, 3,173. Vans: in 1989 we produced 2,446; in 1990, 3,302, and in 1991, 5,214. [passage omitted] I will not read the rest, but just say that as far as the rest of the cases are concerned, other similar types of industrial production have risen at the same pace. [passage omitted]

There is another issue raised by some people which I will mention. We see in some cases that even though production has increased, either factory owners, traders, merchants, or local vendors are being dishonest. This is not right. If the producer or the trader or small vendor is not cooperating with the plan and the people, this will force the government to adopt another approach. The objective of our work is to reach a balance. In some cases when things have reached a balance, prices have found their real level. However, there are many cases where there is adequate production, but the producers or other people are pressuring people. If they do not mend their ways, practice fairness, and be helpful, we will review these cases and may take some stern measures against them. I am serving them a final warning.

We have also another important task to perform alongside this one, which I will mention before I close this sermon. It regards a valid statement which is sometimes mentioned in the press, speeches, or discourses. It says: How are those on fixed salaries supposed to cope with inflation? What are those poor beings of God to do, since inflation exists anyway? Government policy is very clear. Our policy is to raise salaries by a rate above that of inflation. That is to say if the inflation is 10 percent, salaries go up by 20 percent, our intention being to make up for the past ten years. During the war, employees were burdened because their wages remained fixed, but we enforced this policy. Last year we increased salaries by 2,000 tomans, the average of which, in terms of the lower-bracket salaries, amounted to 30 percent. We increased the New Year bonus, which raised salaries by another few percent. This year, too, we are in the process of drafting a regulation to raise salaries even further. Inflation last year was nine percent, whereas the rise in salary was a lot over nine percent. And this policy will continue, that is to say, from now on government policy is that the salary of the wage-earners should go up in line with inflation—in addition to last year's increase. In other words, we will compensate the past deficiency in the course of a seven-to-eight-year period. Of course, I am aware of the problems faced by our wage-earners at this juncture before we reach conclusive results, and we are truly sorry for them. However it would not be to their benefit if we raised their salaries anyway. If we suddenly raised their salaries, the amount of money poured into the market would be snatched by the shopkeepers. Increasing the money supply without matching it with increased commodities will cause inflation; thus our actions must be based on some sort of calculation.

We have already started working on serious infrastructure problems and we will resolve them. We have many power stations under construction. This year our electricity production increased by 12 percent in comparison with last year. Transportation, which was the worst problem in your country—even in the war period we were unable to transport our small loads, and faced delays in ports—has improved this year, and of course one effective factor has been the higher cost of transportation, in the sense that truck drivers have become more operational, and they must work even harder this year. In the first four months of this year [starting 21 March 91] this year, we have enjoyed an increase in the volume of freight by 30-34 percent in terms of land, 17 percent rail, and 27 percent air transport. This growth is very valuable. Again, it will take a few years before we reach a balance. At present we are either in the process of manufacturing trucks, or purchasing them as imports. All of this will be realized, eventually.

My point in this speech is that our society should not be vulnerable. At present we have many serious enemies in the world. As you can see, in the case of Palestine we say one thing, and all the satans of arrogance are saying something else. Well, this shows that we have enemies. A nation that wishes to abide by its goals, must be strong from within society. Individuals and tribunes must not allow themselves to disrupt this national unity, this solidarity, this well-being of the people. We have no choice but to safeguard that asset of national unity—with which we defended our country—in the era of reconstruction. We must remain united. We must resolve these problems, and after resolving them, anyone wishing to go in the pursuit of luxury items may do so.

Our society should not be exposed to unnecessary shocks. Society's cultural issues do not mean that the leaders should neglect such issues. For instance, one should not frighten the hezbollah elements by saying that such and such has happened to such and such a place. We must be on our guard, but it is not right to expose people to shock, to frighten them. We must maintain people's unity. We must maintain people's tolerance. Of course, they need to be supplied with more information. I am aware of this. We must draw up some plans and put the people in the picture. We must make them aware of the facts, so as to neutralize the poisons aimed at us by our enemies. This is the piety we expect of you people.

We expect the rich not to take their money to the bazaar to buy all they want at whatever price, thereby making life difficult for those oppressed people, who are unable to buy expensive commodities. Salesmen must be fair. The rich must be fair. [passage omitted]

God willing, this revolution will have a very bright future. The way I see it, Iran is establishing itself as an upright country. It can become the seat of the leadership of the Lord of the Age. [chants of" Allah is great"; "death to the counterrevolutionaries"; "death to America"; "death to England"; "death to Israel"; "we support the leader and the president"] Thank you very much. I admit that our revolution took place by virtue of the support given by you the people. We defended your country with your support. We will build the country with your support, and I committed myself to working in the area of the country faced with the hardest problem—wherever it may be—the moment I embarked on the scene of struggle. I am at your service and am confident that you will be able to construct your country in the way you want it. [passage omitted]

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [passage omitted]

As the first sermon became very long, I will make the second sermon quite short. I know you are not bothered by the heat and the shortage of space.

I urge you to observe piety. The international and the regional situation is a very worrying situation. We, of course, relying on God's mercy and promises, are confident that God does not forget his pious servants. What I mention are superficial calculations that can be counted as political calculations.

As you are aware, the world issue of the day is the Middle East peace plan. The United States is engineering the project and is leading all behind itself to set up that peace conference. What I see so far amounts to a one-sided situation. If things are going to advance on the same course, then Muslims, the oppressed, the deprived, the Palestinians, and the Arabs will not benefit from it.

Of course, finally it is the United States and the arrogants who are going to lose. But that may happen in the long run.

There was a time when someone would speak with Israel, or would say that he was ready to negotiate with Israel—be it a government, a party, or anyone else—then he would be recognized as an infidel, an apostate, and a traitor. We saw Camp David: Anwar Sadat went and negotiated with Israel and Egypt was rejected from Arab society. Now Egypt is leading some movements again. But now the case is such that Arabs say they are prepared to negotiate, but it is Israel that is making conditions. That is very tragic.

Some of that is due to the Iraqi Government's great strategic blunder which left the region and its society in the situation that you witness. That is how Iraq brought the United States here. Of course, America and the West are still supporting the Ba'thists. But the fact is that the worst act of treachery was committed against Islam.

On the one side there was the United States with a demagogic slogan which was very deceiving to some. On the other side the situation was like a bulldozer in a desert, paving the way to bring the United States to the region. That was what happened.

Now Arabs are approaching the situation from a position of weakness, and America and Israel from a position of strength. They say: Whether you like it or not, that is all there is. The situation is evolving in such manner.

If America had good intentions, then one could say: Very well, peace is going to be achieved, even though not all Arab nations' requests would materialize. But it is doubtful that America has any good intentions. One can be fairly sure that it has no good intentions.

Our own position, as the position of the Islamic revolution, is that we cannot accept such negotiations in any case, because we basically believe that the setting up of the Israeli state was based on usurpation, and that its existence is illegal. Palestine belongs to the people of Palestine, and the Muslims, Christians, and Jews who used to live there. That might include anyone. For the Jews who have come from other parts of the world—if the country has the capacity—then they can remain as second class citizens, and if there is no room for them they should not stay. That is how we see the nature of the case, and any compromise on that is a loss.

Let us leave aside our views, the views that today are not the issue for negotiation between the two sides. Of course, we are not going to give up these views, and the true Palestinian strugglers also will not give up these views, and the world Muslim strugglers also will not give up this idea. But let us consider what the Arab partners are saying. They said after the '67 war: We accept Resolutions 338 and 242. That is, if Israel returns the occupied territories, then we are prepared to negotiate with Israel. That is what a lot of the Arabs said. We are concerned about this. Even if it is implemented—which is a serious compromise and a serious danger—it cannot solve anything. That is because we see the signs.

You see what Israel is saying, what the Arab partners are saying. Arabs have no more concessions to make. They have already uttered their final word. They have said that they are prepared to give up land for peace. That is to take back the West Bank, the Golan Heights, Gaza and so on, and make peace with Israel, and live with it like other countries. No traitor can add to that. That is their final word. But you see what Israel is saying. Israel is saying: No, we do not accept the United Nations as an effective partner in the peace conference. Why does it not accept the United Nations? Because it is bullying.

Israel says the representative of Jerusalem should not take part in the peace conference. That means Israel will not agree to negotiate over Jerusalem and will even not accept its representative. It says Palestinians should not take part as an independent party. Palestinians, in fact, are the major partners. It says they should not take part and if they do want to participate they should come as one delegation with Jordan. That means Palestine is a Jordanian problem.

The meaning of that uttering is obvious. Concerning the Golan Heights, it says: We do not return them, and we say it from now on. Then what is Syria to gain from this peace? It was reported in the news this very morning, that Israel has said, 10-15 years after those times, construct a bridge between the Golan and the land of Israel. This is an action it had not taken until now. Now, on the threshold of the peace talks, it says come and construct a bridge to facilitate people's comings and goings. You see for yourselves that it is bullying all the way. Its statements are tantamount to extortion.

America also, from what we know of it and its past, which is based on our experiences, will not give up Israeli interests. Its major goal has been a great Israel, a powerful Israel, an Israel which is capable on its own, of resisting the regional countries. You are witnessing how it is strengthening it, providing it with arms and equipment. What kind of peace is that? What kind of negotiations are those? What is to come out of those negotiations for the people?

Arabs do not enjoy any significant world support. Soviet support can no longer be counted as support. Europeans are definetly not prepared to offer support. They themselves took part in the creation and strengthening of Israel and they still participate in it. There is no one else.

Of course, the only thing that Arabs and Muslims can have is the support of the public. With what is taking place unfortunately, they would even lose peoples' confidence in them. The morally competent countries, such as Syria, know that Israel has evil intentions. It believes that the negotiations will result in the world realizing that Israel does not want peace. The world must realize that Israel is an aggressor and that Israel's pretending during the past few decades to be a meak regime, was false. The people of the world must realize that its propaganda against Arabs has been false. Perhaps those aims will be achieved. If that is the aim, then it may be achieved. Even now the world realizes, even children realize that Israel is dodging the issue and is making excuses. If that happens, it could be seen as an auspicious development—to decide not to give in to Israeli bullying.

If that is the case, then public opinion will support them in the future. If that is the case, then America will also largely lose as the result.

I should mention my next point. I personally believe that even if America succeeds in imposing its evil intention in that peace conference, then it will be detrimental to it, and a strategic mistake. That is because America is confronted by over 1 billion...[pauses] 1.2 billion Muslims throughout the world. Muslims, under no condition, will give up Beyt ol-Moqqadas, Muslims will not give up the sovereignty of the people of Palestine for any price. They will not give up Palestine so easily. Even if America manages to strengthen Israel for the time being, then the outcome will not be anything better that that of the Crusades. Most definitely, Muslims, one day, led by a committed Muslim, will rise up and end Israeli mischief in the region, and America will be left with their spite and hatred forever. [chants of "God is the greatest," "Khamene'i is the leader," "Death to America," "Death to Israel."] [passage omitted]

Mohtashemi Elected Majles Defense Chairman

LD1108164491 Tehran IRNA in English 1505 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 11, IRNA—Former Interior Minister Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi was elected chairman of the Defence Committee of the Majles (parliament) here today.

MP [member of parliament] Hojjat ol-Eslam Rasul Montajab-Nia was elected the first vice-chairman of the Defence Committee.

In related news, MPs Mohammad Seyyed Taslimi and Asadollah Razavi were respectively elected the chairman and the first vice-chairman of the Culture and Higher Education Committee of the Majles.

Council Calls For Liberation of Jerusalem

LD1008174191 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Regional developments were examined at today's meeting of the country's Supreme National Security Council. At the meeting, the need for the fulfillment of the rights of the Muslim Palestinian nation, the liberation of noble Jerusalem, and its return to the Islamic ummah was stressed. The meeting was chaired by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and attended by all members, high-ranking military commanders, and advisers.

At the meeting, Mr. Velayati also presented a report about the meeting of the foreign ministers of the Islamic Conference Organization member countries.

Velayati Returns After ICO Meeting in Istanbul

LD0908164591 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Velayati, who visited Turkey in order to participate in the 20th meeting of foreign ministers of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO], returned to Tehran this evening. He reviewed the issues discussed at the meeting in an interview with our correspondent. He said: The concerns of the Islamic world, such as the Palestine and Afghanistan issues and Iraq's violation of Kuwait, as well as world affairs, such as the new world order and regional political developments, were discussed at the session. He added: At that meeting, the Islamic Republic of Iran, having rejected America's proposal on resolving the Palestinian issue, emphasized the need for unity amongst the world's Muslims and cooperation among the Islamic countries aimed at resolving their problems. Mr. Velayati went on: In the 28 meetings held on the sidelines with the foreign ministers participating in the Istanbul conference, ways of expanding the Islamic Republic of Iran's relations with those countries, as well as issues concerning the Islamic world, were discussed.

Discusses Opposition to U.S. Plans

LD0908181191 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] Foreign minister Velayati, who travelled to Turkey to participate in the 20th meeting of the ICO [Islamic Conference Organization] foreign ministers returned to Tehran this afternoon. In an interview with our correspondent he pointed to issues raised during this session and said: The Palestine issue; Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the losses incurred as a consequence of the Persian Gulf crisis; the question of the new world order; human rights in Islam; and the problem of Afghanistan and Kashmir were among the most important issues reviewed in the Istanbul session.

In connection with the Islamic Republic of Iran's stance toward the Palestine issue, Mr. Velayati said: [begin Velayati recording] We explained our views about the Palestine issue which is the most important issue in the world of Islam right now. The American plan regarding Palestine was explicitly and analytically opposed—we opposed it—both in the speech and in the political committee in charge of drawing up the final resolution of the ICO. As to the new world order, for the first time in this session, we raised the point that the world of Islam should confront this fundamental and vital issue in an active manner. The disintegration of Marxism and changes in the world's political scene and global realignment require that the world of Islam should once again redefine and articulate its position and find its deserved status in today's world. Muslims should not wait in anticipation for a new order to be drawn up again without their presence and imposed on them. [end recording]

Reportage on Reaction to Bakhtiar Killing in Paris

Embassy in Paris Denies Involvement

LD0908143691 Tehran IRNA in English 1350 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] Paris, Aug. 9 IRNA—In a communique here Friday, the Iranian Embassy firmly denied rumors about the Islamic Government having been possibly involved in the assassination here Tuesday of Shapur Bakhtiar, the past prime minister of the ex-shah who was toppled in February 1979.

The Iranian Embassy stressed in its communique "the assassination of Bakhtiar may possibly have been engineered by certain groups who are opposed to the improvement in the relations between Iran and France."

The embassy statement did not rule out the possibility of the assassination having been the outcome of "in-fightings" between dissident Iranian emigre-groups outside of Iran.

Legal Affairs Official Comments

LD1108184191 Tehran IRNA in English 1616 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 11, IRNA—The killing of the last prime minister of the defunct shah's regime, regardless of the motive behind, was actually Shapur Bakhtiar's "second death", said a senior Iranian official.

"Bakhtiar in fact slit his own throat and committed suicide when he accepted the premier's job from the shah," wrote Ata'ollah Mohajerani, vice-president for legal and parliamentary affairs in an article in the Persian daily ETTELA'AT today.

"If we become wishful thinkers and accept Bakhtiar's political record during his days in the national movement, we see him as a wayward pious who broke his long and attritive fast with pork and champagne", he said.

Thirst for power and probably over-riding ambition to get the premier's job prevented him from recongnizing the reality of the Islamic revolution, wrote the official.

"He even had the chance to resign and join the masses on seeing the massive welcome accorded to Imam Khomeyni by the Iranian people," said Mohajerani of the shah's last premier who was found murdered at his home in Paris last Thursday.

Quoting views of some Iranian self-exiles, he said in fact the role of all groups opposing the Islamic Republic is almost nothing. "They are like rats who run and play around the mountain side, therefore why should the Islamic Republic try to kill any of them?"

According to Mohajerani "Bakhtiar, Bani Sadr and their like could not obstruct normalization of Iran-France relations when alive, so there is no reason why their death should."

Sympathy of the French press and some French officials is "understandable", he said "because Bakhtiar was more French than Iranian. He had a French wife, all his children live in France, his son is a police officer in Paris and his daughters were named after France and Paris."

Bakhtiar has explained this in his autobiography better than any one else that how he melted in the French cultural pot and cut himself off from his own people and religion.

"There is music and mysteries in Christianity, but in Islam, by god, no..." Mohajerani quoted from Bakhtiar's autobiography.

ETTELA'AT also printed on the same page the photographs of the three suspects of the Bakhtiar murder.

English Dailies on Murder

LD1108111691 Tehran IRNA in English 0809 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 11, IRNA—A Tehran newspaper Sunday viewed last week's assassination of the defunct shah's last prime minister Shapur Bakhtiar in Paris as "an easy way of straining Tehran-Paris ties." It called on "Iranian and European leaders not to fall into the trap set for them."

Referring to Bonn's last June decision on completion of their semi-finished nuclear power plant in Bushehr, southern Iran, the editorial in the English-language daily 'KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL' said "there were extraneous, third-party influences trying to strain improving Iran-Germany ties."

"In June it was Germany, now it is France. Tehran-Paris ties are good and getting better and the two countries have been counting on them.... But these improving ties must have had the enemies of the Islamic Republic try again."

The paper believed, "Iran should expect some kind of an impediment every time it tries to lay the foundation of a meaningful long-run relationship with a major European country" and predicted "the next plot may emerge in London."

Writing that "the time of implementing the job must have been very carefully chosen," it added "the abominable killing of Bakhtiar was not a political assassination but a gangland style slaying and has all the appearances of a mafia vengeance."

"The assassins will not be caught if big hands are involved and the stakes are high," the paper said adding, "the Iranian opposition stationed in Paris, or for that matter those in other European capitals, are no threats to the Islamic Republic to require a harsh and noisy measure of this kind. Any assessment of Tehran-Paris ties by Iran cannot be indifferent to the impact of such an act on bilateral relations."

"Just as the condemnation of Iranian Ambassador to Paris Ali Ahani has demonstrated, Iran does not stand to benefit from such an act at such a crucial juncture in its post-war social and economic reconstruciton."

The paper said in conclusion, "The gravity of political infighting among opposition groups should not be underestimated either, if the absence of foreign involvement in the assassination of Bakhtiar is proven. The spotlight might move on to the opposition groups who have been active recently to liquidate one another to enhance and consolidate power."

Meanwhile, an editorial in the other English-language daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' today shared the view with KAYHAN, stating that Bakhtiar "had no political importance and posed no danger to the Islamic Republic of Iran."

It believed that the assassination was an attempt to tarnish Tehran's reputation gained after its sincere efforts to provide release of the Western hostages in Lebanon.

"Now the enemies of the Islamic Republic are trying to involve Iran in that assassination case, while the Islamic regime of Iran has repeatedly declared that it condemns all sorts of terrorist activities.

"The Islamic regime which from the very beginning became victim of terrorism again condemned this terrorist act and is even ready to cooperate with any international body to go into details of the enquiry so that the truth may be divulged."

Statement Accuses Regime

TA1208082391 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 0330 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text of statement on Shapur Bakhtiar's assassination issued by Flag of Freedom Organization on 8 August; place not given]

[Text] The filthy, tainted, and defunct Islamic Republic regime, which is going through its last wretched days, has once again committed a dirty crime due to fear and cowardice when its hirelings killed one of the most veteran combatants for Iran's freedom in Paris. This murdered person is Dr. Shapur Bakhtiar, Iran's former prime minister and prominent member of Iran's National Front and leader of the Iranian National Resistance Movement, who from the outset embarked on a struggle and confrontation against Khomeyni and his associates. Bakhtiar's name will always be recorded in the annals of our country's liberation movements as having the merit of seniority in combating Khomeyni and his Velayat-e Faqih.

We will cherish the memory of this combatant for Iran's freedom and will place his name in golden letters beside the names of other martyrs on the path of Iran's freedom, and alongside those of Shahryar Shafiq, Oveysi, Dr. Cyrus Elahi, and 'Abdorrahman Borumand, who were killed in Paris on the orders of the Islamic Republic regime. We sincerely believe that Khomeyni's wretched regime is committing these crimes because it is observing its imminent death. Long live Iran. Long live the Iranian people.

[Signed] Flag of Freedom Organization

Series of Editorials on Government, Society Ends

Discussion of Social Welfare

NC0908131191 Tehran JAHAN-E ELSAM in Persian 3 Aug 91 pp 1, 7

[Ninth in a series of editorials by M. Qums: "The Government, Society, and Policymaking"]

[Excerpts] The objective of progress is human welfare. Progress does not merely mean an increase in production. One should see what is produced and how; and planning is a means to address this basic issue.

It is wrong to think that increased production is the only value in development and progress. Experience has shown that production for the sake of increasing the GNP has never led to progress. An increase in the GNP is an initial factor, but not the only prerequisite because production has a much wider dimension than economic growth. The measure by which this growth can be recognized is the end of poverty. Social conditions for progress can be created only when the difference between the standards of living among the various strata of society is removed. How can we do this? [passage omitted]

Affluence and poverty are the major factors because both are completely social-economic phenomenon the study of which requires a long process. Eventually what will prove whether planning and policies have been correct or not is the symmetry that is achieved between the living standards of the various sectors of a society. This is the meaning of human welfare. Production is for welfare and welfare can be achieved only when poverty is uprooted. If production within the framework of the social policy of a society does not strike directly at the reasons for poverty and backwardness, it will be impossible to achieve a social equilibrium and welfare. [passage omitted]

Is our society poor? Are our people poor? The answers to these questions are both difficult and easy. If we take the extent of our expectations and our ideals as our criteria into consideration, then yes, we can say that a large percentage of our society is facing poverty. If we take our potential national resources into consideration, then we can say that yes, our society and our people are poor. If we take our social conditions into consideration, the answer will be the same. These are ordinary realities. Iran, however, owns some of the major oil and gas resources in the Middle East and should, therefore, not be poor. Iran has versatile climatic conditions. It has intact farmlands. It has an unprecedented historic and scientific past. It has a capable and unified people. It should not be poor but it is. Why? We must look back to other problems that have both social and economic-political roots. Obviously our revolution and our Islamic Republic are young and the roots of these problems do not all lie in this young republic.

This is not the issue. The important thing is for us to see that we are generally facing poverty and particularly facing economic poverty. This should be recognized as a genuine reality. What concerns us today is not overcoming all problems immediately but getting ourselves on the correct path which will lead to a solution to these problems. Plans and their experiences and assessments are aimed at finding a direction toward which to move and not to do injustice to any individual, organ, or specific movement. If we forget this we will fall into an impasse. Two years passed since the first Five-Year Plan for economic and social development was introduced. Production planning has taken on a serious nature. Its policies have been announced and practical steps have been taken to announce programs. This is not the ambiguous point.

The ambiguous point is the other side of the coin—that is, just distribution. Any step toward increased production should be done in tandem with steps for just distribution as well in products as well as salaries. But has this been done? Are we moving in a direction which will ensure these one day? If the answer to these questions is positive, why has the gap between the social strata increased? Why and on what basis do we see a mechanism of increased welfare, wealth, and comfort among a limited strata on the one hand while we are witnessing the vulnerability of a large portion of society on the other? No one can deny facts because the first important step in solving problems is the ability to accept genuine realities and facts.

Social crises and problems in social relations are not spontaneous phenomena. There is a genuine basis for such crises and problems to exist. Whether these crises and problems are many or few is a secondary matter. If a reality does not exist, political processes in the country and abroad cannot exploit it. Of course there is no doubt that the method of creating crises is a campaign tool. But this method can be used only when there are grounds to justify it. We should try to think where our shortcomings stem from. Is it our programs which we cannot implement or our strategic policies as the theoretic basis for our movement toward economic development that are facing problems? Definitely all of these may apply.

Production, Consumption Viewed

NC1008062191 Tehran JAHAN-E ELSAM in Persian 4 Aug 91 pp 1, 2

[Last in a series of editorials by M. Qums: "The Government, Society, and Policymaking"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] What leads to production and how? The first part of the question clarifies the goal behind production and the second part clarifies its mechanism. Production in each society is based on a society's needs: First, to solve domestic problems; second, to strengthen the financial structure and capital. These are the two elements that depict the future objectives of a society in its international relations and regional standing. We should first look at the various and special aspects of our society when discussing domestic needs. We should see whether our society needs more color television sets, Peugeots or Toyotas, gypsum, cement, lime, tiles, education material, foodstuff, etc.... In relation to our second priority, strengthening the financial structure, should we be looking for ways to expand our aluminum industries or ways to expand our carpet industries and agriculture?

No one can deny the importance of these products. What we should do is to prioritize them because, as we previously stated, basic and correct planning is aimed at setting priorities and not at striking one or several items off our list. In order to clarify things, we will now discuss our domestic needs which will answer the first part of the question asked at the beginning of this piece.

Since the birth of the Islamic Republic 13 years ago, our society passed through many phases which impacted society in various ways, the most destructive of which were inflicted during the war, during attacks by domestic opposition groups and during the economic siege. As a result, the most important characteristic of the Islamic Republic's policies have been aimed at reconstructing damage, uprooting of the incorrect vestiges of the past, and improving the existing situation. [passage omitted]

If we are fair we will see that there is no coordination between our needs and our investments in production. It is clear that we need imports to meet our needs in foodstuff. Our agriculture cannot produce enough food, and our agro-industry is in its initial stages. We have taken steps to build dams, but the steps have not been taken in the correct direction. Electricity problems are worrying. We are, however, witnessing growth in some industries. Although this is good to see, there is no justification at this juncture for a great deal of investment in these growing industries, two of which are the color television and the automobile industries. Some may say that the grounds for making these industries operational existed and that the need for foreign exchange led to investment in them, and this may be a logical answer from an economic point of view. Realistically speaking, however, this is not a good answer.

A society that depends on the outside world for its rice, animal fodder, and wheat needs should consume in proportion with its conditions. Truly speaking, we can justify the absence of color televisions and latest-model cars in our society if we consume at a correct level. We are not able to justify this now because we have created an incorrect level of consumption and we have to meet expectations and needs. We will have to import goods from abroad if we fail to meet these needs domestically. This incorrect cycle is the logical outcome of the mechanism used in our planning. The popular opinion is that there is no logical relationship between our genuine needs and production. Of course, this does not mean an absolute rejection of the entire process because many of our industries, such as the cement, steel, aluminum plants, and so on are operating to meet genuine needs. The issue in question is the extent of investment needed based on national priorities.

Daily Says Inflation 'Originates' From Government

NC0908105291 Tehran KAYAHN INTERNATIONAL in English 1 Aug 91 p 2

[Editorial: "Problem of Inflation"]

[Text] One of the primary pre-occupations of the Islamic Republic government presently is how to control, or at least slow, the country's spiraling inflation. And it seems the government is not realizing as much success as it would like in its endeavor in this connection.

Inflation can have negative outcomes for the government, one of which is the loss of public loyalty. The public in Iran used to follow up and pay strict attention to government's economic plans out of the conviction that they are intended to improve their lots, or living conditions in general. But that is not exactly the case any longer.

One of the reasons why the present government is experiencing problems in the conomic arena is because of the fact that it is trying to erect a system on a previous one that in many ways was different from it.

The government of ex-Premier Musavi tried to establish an economy which was by definition centralized. The present government is promoting a decentralized economy, or seems to be aspiring to do so. In trade—both domestic and (mainly foreign—the previous government tried to have the final and may be the only say where as the present one is trying to delegate trade to the market. The government of ex-premier Musavi tried to stabilize prices by various subsidies, the present one is trying to remove them and let the forces of the supply and demand to determine them. One can go on listing other differences. Therefore, trying to curb inflation on the ashes of a previous one which took more than half a dozen years to do, what it did is not an easy one and for that reason the present government should have the public's sympathy and cooperation.

However, one can sense a kind of contradiction in the present government's words and deeds as far as the economy is concerned. Just at the same time that it looks to be gravely concerned about curbing inflation, its affiliated bodies or branches announce—or sometimes act without announcing—hikes in the prices of their products or services.

The prices of such utilities as gas, water, electric power, telephone and so on keep increasing periodically by many folds. Just as the government is talking about controlling inflation, the finance ministry raises taxes. Let alone the municipality which seems to be on a charging spree.

Following the successful model in other countries, the government is trying to remove subsidies that act as a burden. It is transfering the ownership of inefficient concerns to the private sector so that it can get on with more important jobs. To lessen the burden of financing, the agencies which have traditionally received their budget from the government, it has introduced the self-sufficiency plan.

However, some agencies, such as Tehran's municipality, seem to have misunderstood the plan and are on an inflationary course. The municipality's exhorbitant charges act contrary to the wishes of the government. The same can be said about the finance ministry's taxing system, and some of the foundations—which are viewed by the public to be part of the government but which are not regarded so by the latter to be so.

Therefore, in short, inflation in Iran indirectly originates from the government and not until an integrated plan is introduced and followed by all of its branches can the country have a chance of living away from it.

Editorial Views Cancellation of Czech Tank Sale

NC0908105191 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES INTERNATIONAL WEEKLY in English 1 Aug 91 p 2

[Editorial: "Did Iran Really Need Those Outmoded Tanks?"]

[Text] A recent statement given out by the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry mentions that authorization for the sale of 15 hundred T-54 and T-55 tanks to Iran has been cancelled. The statement also adds that the Czechoslovak Government has approved the sale of 200 T-72 tanks to Syria.

Political observers, who consider the summit meeting in Moscow as the most significant contact between the East and the West since the end of the cold war, believe the statement by the Czechoslovak Government bears a specific meaning.

After the dismantling of the "iron curtain" in the past two years, and the changes in government systems in the East European countries, many of these countries faced gravely distressing economic problems. Apart from the backwardness of the available technology in the East European countries, lack of adequate finance is among the major causes of the economic crisis, and many of the governments in Eastern urope tried to attract finance from the West, and the U.S. in particular, in order to revitalize their economies.

The race for currying favor with the leaders of the U.S. Government took many forms, and each country tried to prove to the United States that it was more willing that the others to accept Washington's views on almost all international issues in the hope that U.S. might give a helping hand in the rehabilitation of the ailing economies of these coutnries.

The recent statement by the Czechoslovak Government can only be understood in the context of the above circumstances, for it is common knowledge that during the past year East European countries have been trying to sell, at any price, their antiquated armaments specially their wornout tanks. Even the Soviet Union is quite anxious to earn foreign exchange through sale of newer models of its tanks.

Now the question is should a country like Iran, with 8 years of actual combat experience want to buy such antiquated, outworn tanks like T-54's in such huge quantities.

It would be a great mistake to believe that Iran is prepared to pay hard-earned foreign exchange for such outmoded, archaic weaponry especially at a time when there are countries who are willing to provide us with the technology to manufacture tanks inside the country.

Pakistan

Government Denies Minister Owes Money to BCCI

BK1008231591 Hong Kong AFP in English 1805 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Islamabad, Aug 10 (AFP)—The Pakistani Government Saturday dismissed allegations published in the British daily THE GUARDIAN that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif owes millions of dollars to the striken Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI).

"Neither Sharif nor his family own any company called Himalaya Textile and the Ittefaq Group of Companies run by the family of the prime minister does not owe any money to BCCI, Hussein Haqqani, a spokesman for Sharif said.

The newspaper, citing a confidential report from accountants Coopers and Lybrand Deloitte, claimed Saturday that Himalaya Textile owed the bank 3.4 million dollars.

Interior Minister Chaudry Shujat Hussain, who was among those named by the British paper in connection with the scandal-ridden bank, said he would take action against the paper unless it retracts the statement and apologises.

THE GUARDIAN alleged in the report that a group of companies owned by the minister's family owes nearly 8.5 million dollars to BCCI, which has been closed down around the world.

The government spokesman said the report was "reflective of the kind of speculative and sensationalist journalism we have seen in some sections of the international media since the beginning of the BCCI saga".

Foreign Secretary To Lead Delegation to India

BK1108050491 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 11 Aug 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] Islamabad, Aug 10—Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Shahryar Khan will lead a high-level delegation to New Delhi on Aug 19 to hold important deliberations with Indian leaders on matters of bilateral concern and outstanding disputes between the two countries, including the problem of Kashmir.

The federal cabinet which met here on Saturday under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was given detailed briefing on the state of Pakistan's relations with India by the Foreign secretary. The cabinet later approved the proposal to have talks with India on the outstanding issues at the level of Foreign Secretaries and to send a delegation to New Delhi on Aug 19.

Briefing newsmen on the cabinet proceedings the PM's Adviser on Information Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said that the talks which are being held in the light of recent telephonic conversation held between Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his Indian counterpart Narasimha Rao would cover a wide range of matters outstanding between the two countries including Kashmir and the nuclear issue.

He said, the Indian Prime Minister while talking to the Prime Minister of Pakistan had expressed his desire to settle all issues including the problem of Kashmir amicably so that tension prevailing today could be resolved.

The two Prime Ministers, he said, are soon to meet on the occasion of the Commonwealth conference being held next month at Harare. Premier Nawaz Sharif, he said, suggested the holding of preliminary talks at the Foreign Secretaries level to finalise the agenda for the summit meeting.

The Foreign Secretary, he said, also briefed the cabinet on progress relating to the political settlement of Afghan issue and the deliberations which took place in the recently concluded talks between the Iranian Foreign Minister Akbar Velayti with the Secretary General Foreign Affairs and the leaders of Afghan groups and political parties based in Pakistan and Iran. The Foreign Secretary informed the cabinet that a high ranking representative of the Soviet Union Mr Kozyrev was reaching Islamabad today in connection with efforts for a political settlement of the Afghan issue. He said that the Soviet Union was now firmly convinced that Pakistan was sincerely keen to have a political settlement of the Afghan problem and wanted to resolve the issue. Talks with the visiting Soviet representative, he said, would be another step forward in the solution of the Afghan problem. Later during the current month Pakistan-Iran based Afghan group leaders would meet at Tehran to proceed further towards the goal of political settlement.

The federal cabinet at its meeting approved two agreements signed between Pakistan and India in April 1991.

The first agreement is related to the holding of military exercises and movements of troops while the other is concerned with prevention of air space violation.

Under the first agreement, the two countries had agreed to give advance notice on military exercise manoeuvres and troops movement. The two sides will not conduct exercises of their land forces at divisional level and above within five kilometers of the borders. Both countries under the second agreement would ensure measures that violation of each other's air space does not take place.

Replying to a question the Advisor said that the border situation was normal and there was no concentration of troops.

Prime Minister Formally Privatizes Allied Bank

BK1108084891 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, presented the letter of acceptance for the sale of Allied Bank to its employees at a function in Karachi this morning. Speaking on the occasion, he said today is the historic day in the life of Allied Bank as its ownership is being transferred to its employees. He hoped that employees of other units, which are going to be privatized, would come forward and form their own group to bid for the ownership.

The prime minister declared that the aim of the present government's policy of privatization is not to make a few people rich, but to bring prosperity to the nation, the toiling masses, and the workers. Mr. Nawaz Sharif said his government believes in followed and complete work and not hollow slogans. The politics of slogans has gone and it is now time to work.

Sharif on Situation in Sindh, Indian Relations

BK1108145791 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1400 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has said that the situation in Sindh has improved and its atmosphere has become clean to a great extent. Speaking to newsmen at Karachi airport before his departure for Islamabad this evening, he said the steps taken by the provincial chief minister, Jam Sadiq Ali, to establish peace and fraternal feeling in the province are satisfactory. He expressed the hope that the law and order situation will become normal soon. In response to a question on the rumors spread by certain quarters about the future of the government, he said the government is not worried about the politics based on the rumors of the opposition parties and it will not be affected by these rumors. The prime minister said he is ready to meet with any politician in the interest of the country and the people.

Referring to Pakistan's relations with India, Nawaz Sharif said Pakistan has been wanting to resolve all its outstanding issues with India through peaceful dialogue. Pakistan has already initiated the process of bilateral talks and a Pakistani delegation is leaving for New Delhi on the 19th of this month for the next round of talks.

Sharif Speaks With MQM Chief on Issues

BK1108161491 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif held talks with Muhajir Qaumi Movement [MQM] Leader Altaf Hussain in Karachi today on several national and provincial issues, with particular reference to the current political situation. Later, talking to newsmen, Nawaz Sharif said he has vested the responsibility with Federal Minister For Industries Chaudhary Shujat Hussain to remove the misunderstanding between MQM and Jamaat-i-Islami. He expressed the hope that Jamaat-i-Islami will continue its support to the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad government. He said we are keeping close watch on the situation in occupied Kashmir and cannot ignore the events there. He said peace is the basic need for the development and well being of India and Pakistan.

On bringing back the the stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh, the prime minister said arrangements are being made for their return and their settlement in Punjab.

PRC Readiness for NPT Won't Affect Stance

BK1108050091 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 11 Aug 91 p 1

[By Mohammad Saleh Zaafir]

[Text] Islamabad, Aug. 10—China's readiness to sign NPT [Non-Proliferation Treaty] will not affect Pakistan's position towards this treaty.

Commenting on China's announcement, a spokesman of Pakistan Foreign Office told THE MUSLIM on Saturday evening that Pakistan will not change its position regarding the NPT. Pakistan thinks if India signs NPT, Pakistan will be ready to sign it without any delay.

To a question the spokesman said China is authorised to keep nuclear weapons by virtue of an international understanding and signing of NPT by it will not close the option of keeping nuclear weapons.

He said in case India or Pakistan signs the NPT, it will close the option of keeping or developing nuclear weapons. Official comments of the Foreign Office on China's preparedness to sign the treaty would be available in a couple of days.

PRC To Discuss Arms Control, Nuclear Issues

BK1208030491 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 12 Aug 91

[Text] A high-level delegation led by Senate Chairman Wasim Sajjad left Islamabad for Beijing last night on a five-day official visit to China. Talking to newsmen before his departure, the Senate chairman said they will discuss with Chinese leaders matters relating to regional and international issues and bilateral relations. He said the prime minister's proposal for arms control and nuclear nonproliferation in South Asia will figure prominently during the talks. Answering a question, Wasim Sajjad said talks will also be held on China's proposed willingness to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

The delegation includes Akram Zaki, the secretary general of foreign affairs, and other senior officials of the Foreign Office.

Reportage on Soviet Delegations Visit, Talks

Afghan Issue Discussed

BK1108143691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1400 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Both Pakistan and the Soviet Union desire the restoration of Afghanistan's status as a sovereign, independent, and nonaligned Islamic country. This harmonious view was expressed during the meeting of Soviet Ambassador Nikolai with President Ghulam Ishaq Khan in Islamabad today. The president reiterated Pakistan's determination for a political solution to the Afghan issue and mentioned Pakistan's untiring efforts in this regard. He said the resolution of the Afghan issue will open up vistas of unlimited scope for cooperation between Pakistan and the Soviet Union.

The Soviet ambassador welcomed Pakistan's efforts for a political solution to the Afghan issue.

Afghanistan Issue Discussed Further

BK1108155791 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Official talks between Pakistan and the Soviet Union on Afghanistan were held in Islamabad today. The Soviet delegation is led by Soviet Ambassador Nikolay T. Kozyrev and the Pakistani delegation by Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Khan. The talks were held against the backdrop of the efforts of the countries concerned and the United nations for a political resolution of the Afghanistan problem. Both countries expressed their willingness to continue a close liaison on the UN Secretary General's five point program for a solution to the Afghanistan problem.

A three-member Soviet foreign ministry delegation arrived in Islamabad this morning to take part in the talks.

Official Returns, Discuss Islamic Meeting Outcome

BK1008090891 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Pakistan has achieved all its objectives at the 20th conference of Islamic foreign ministers, due to the just stand taken by it during the Gulf crisis. This was stated by secretary general of foreign affairs, Mr. Akram Zaki, while talking to newsmen on his arrival at Islamabad airport this morning, after leading Pakistan's delegation at the conference in Istanbul. He said the just and (?clear) stand taken by Pakistan has enhanced the prestige of the nation among the Muslim world, which helped our delegation to get adopted all eight resolutions put up in the conference by Pakistan. Mr. Zaki said the unanimous passage of [words indistinct] resolutions on Kashmir and Afghanistan. He said the resolution on Kashmir was a quantum jump over the resolution adopted by the 19th Islamic foreign ministers conference in Cairo. He said for the first time, the massive violations of human rights in occupied Kashmir had been strongly condemned by the conference. The resolution has called for the respect of human rights of the Kashmiri people, including the right of self-determination.

Mr. Akram Zaki described his talks with the leaders of delegations of other Muslim countries as very useful. About his talks with the Turkish leaders prior to the conference, he said there was complete identity of views between Pakistan and Turkey on Kashmir, Afghanistan, and other regional and international issues. It was also decided at these talks that Pakistan's President Ghulam Ishaq Khan would pay a state visit to Turkey in the first half of October next.

Commentary: Pressler Amendment 'Discriminatory'

BK1108100991 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Mohammad Yamin Commentary]

[Text] Every sovereign state has the right to enact legislations designed to serve its national interests in an effective manner. This cannot be questioned. However, if any legislation infringes on activities of other states as well—that it is devised in a manner that it is directed against one country alone to the exclusion of others engaged in the same activities—such discrimination will need extraordinary justification. One such piece of U.S. legislation is the Pressler Amendment, which singles out Pakistan for discriminatory treatment in the context of its nuclear program. This point was clearly brought out by the Senate Chairman, Mr. Wasim Sajjad, while talking to a visiting delegation of the U.S. Congressmen the other day.

Apart from the so-called nuclear club, whose members already possess nuclear capability of variant type and degree, a number of countries, including Pakistan, have nuclear development programs of their own. Pakistan has a modest program meant for clearly peaceful purposes, such as those of meeting the growing needs of power and energy and promotion of medicine. The United States' endeavor is that there should be no further proliferation of the nuclear capability. The United States is for good reasons a leading exponent of the UN sponsored nonproliferation treaty. As observed by the Senate chairman during his conversation with the U.S. legislators, Pakistan shared the U.S. perception on the nonproliferation issue, and it had supported the UN resolution on the subject well back in the early seventies. In fact, Pakistan has ever since been making its own contribution to the enhancement of the concept of nonproliferation through repeated efforts at the United Nations by having South Asia declared as a nuclear free zone. Pakistan was also prepared to sign the nonproliferation treaty without any delay, provided India did the same. This is necessary because India is a major military power in the region and has already proved its nuclear prowess by exploding a nuclear device in 1974.

It is logical for Pakistan to insist on the safeguard, and this even-handed regional approach, for the simple reason that in its short life of 40 years, it has had to face military invasion from India thrice, resulting in the loss of half of the country in 1971. Even now, the unresolved dispute over Kashmir exists between the two countries, with India showing no desire to fulfill its international commitments on Kashmir. In these circumstances, it is indeed impossible for Pakistan to allow a neighboring country to freely go nuclear, while its own nuclear program was nonnuclear [weapons] oriented. Pakistan has over the years initiated many proposals to get over this complex issue and is even more than willing to subscribe to any international safeguards, provided the arrangement did not apply only to Pakistan. The latest such initiative came from the Pakistan prime minister who has proposed that the question may be considered in an international conference to be attended by the United States, the Soviet Union, China, India and Pakistan so that an amicable and practical solution is worked out. The idea has received support not only from the United States, the Soviet Union and China, but also from a large number of other countries. But India is acting as a stumbling block by evoking a negative response.

Pakistan would not give up the projection of the Nawaz Sharif initiative, which is based on equality and fairplay. It is hoped that the Senate chairman will take up the issue during his forthcoming visit to China in order to attract even greater world attention to Pakistan's principled stand for an even-handed approach by the world powers to the question of nuclar non-proliferation.

Sri Lanka

Tamils Reportedly Lose 2,100 at Elephant Pass

BK0908121091 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 9 Aug 91

[Text] The Balawegaya task force consolidated its position in the perimeter of Elephant Pass. This was disclosed by Colonel Sarath Munasinghe at the Army headquarters when he briefed the entire operation carried out by Operation Balawegaya in taking control of the Elephant Pass Army camp. The news conference was held at the parliamentary complex in Kotte yesterday. Col. Munasinghe briefed the press with the help of video clippings. He pointed out that the troops faced heavy resistance from the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists during the operation to free the besieged Army camp at Elephant Pass. The security forces came across several bunkers and the whole area was mined. He detailed the operations from the 1st to the 7th of this month during which time the security forces destroyed many bunkers, including major ones, and made LTTE cadres to flee. Col. Munasinghe added that an estimated 2,100 terrorists had been killed during the entire Elephant Pass operation.

More LTTE Cadres Killed

BK1008112691 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 10 Aug 91

[Text] Balawegaya troops are reported to be consolidating their positions and mopping up a few remaining pockets of the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists as they establish a new forward defense line and expand their area of control to two km south of the outer perimeter of the Elephant Pass security forces camp. Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that 150 LTTE cadres were killed on Thursday as ground troops backed by air support crushed the remaining LTTE resistance after fierce fighting. Government troops also retook the Parantan Chemicals Corporation's bungalow and a school. The Balawegaya troops fought bravely on soggy ground caused by the heavy rains.

Meanwhile, the LTTE leadership has broadcast over its radio transmissions that every family in Jaffna should contribute one child to fight in the LTTE military wing.

Successes Against LTTE Noted

BK1108114891 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 11 Aug 91

[Text] Three hundred fifty-two more LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists were killed in fierce fighting during the last 24 hours and the [Operation] Balawegaya troops further consolidated the extended forward defense lines of the Elephant Pass security forces camp. The general officer commanding the Operation Balawegaya task force, Major General Denzil Kobbekaduwa, praised the collective spirit and high courage and unity among the Army, Navy and the Air Force which made the operation a tremendous success. Major General Denzil Kobbekaduwa told LANKAPUVATH that all units of the Army, Navy, and Air Force showed fantastic courage and a tremendous spirit of comradeship in battle. The personnel of all three services were magnificent.

Meanwhile, official sources told LANKAPUVATH a total of 2,552 LTTE terrorists have been killed since July the 10th, exactly one month after the Tigers began their abortive and highly disastrous siege of the Elephant Pass camp. The LTTE has broadcast the names of 955 deaths, including 12 of its top (?cadre) leaders, only next in seniority to Mahattaya. They include Rahim, Bama, Para, Kavida and Tavan. Four hundred and sixty bodies of dead terrorists have been recovered by government troops so far. Seven hundred to 1,000 well fortified terrorist bunkers and trenches have been destroyed in the battle for Elephant Pass. Two hundred and fifty guns and large stocks of [word indistinct] rocket-propelled grenades, ammunition, and medical supplies were captured. Six armor-plated bulldozers were among the large number of terrorist vehicles destroyed. One base station radio was also captured from the terrorists.

Official sources said fifty-two terrorists were killed yesterday as the Balawegaya troops wiped out the remaining enemy position as the new southern defense line was consolidated. The bodies of four terrorists were recovered. Ground troops backed by air cover captured the LTTE village stronghold of Paduwankodi, south of the camp on Friday [9 August]. The bodies of 40 of the 100 dead terrorists were recovered.

Meanwhile, troops consolidating the Elephant Pass camp's new northern defense line encountered a force of an estimated 500 terrorists. Official sources said 150 LTTE cadres were killed.